GAY PAGES

SPECIAL COLLECTOR'S EDITION 2020

25th BIRTHDAY EDITION

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FROM THE EDITOR

While digging for old 35mm photographs of the madly popular Family Business cabaret shows that I organised for 4 years and which held the spectacular record of not once, not selling out, I experienced a profound sense of nostalgia. These photographs that I dug out of shoeboxes from a vast wealth of archival historic delight had captured some incredible moments. Sadly, many of the images are grainy and not good enough for publishing, but memorable they are indeed. *The Family Business* is a good, entertaining read in this edition, so for the first time in 25 years, I am not saying anything else about it or the significance of being the first gay business association in Africa established in 1992, as you can read it in more detail on page 60. This means that the *Gay Pages* although having turned 25 on 10 December 2019 has 2-year older roots.

Turning 25 happened twice in my life, and now, the second time, I am more appreciative, more contemplative, as I now am starting to grasp how incredibly special this number is. A number neither I, nor many of you will ever see again. Some of those lucky ones who are still looking forward to this special number will only comprehend the magnitude of this special significance much later in life. Strangely most of this only really dawned upon me now as I am contemplating the magnificence of a second chance to experience this fascinating turning point in life. The *Gay Pages* has taken me on the most incredible journey in this life. A journey many of you have experienced in your own special way. Some of the stories in this edition shares some irresistibly captivating tales of the secret delight of readers recalling their experience as teenage boys who had discovered the *Gay Pages* for the first time. Strangely the common age most cited is 14. That brings back memories for just about all of us, leaving no question regarding the reality of sexual awareness and the extent to which it manifests in actual interaction with whatever the world offers to teenagers. I was no different and my previous story about coming of age in the *2019 Summer Edition* indulged the reader with some of my thoughts as a young teenager on the subject.

The *Gay Pages* has served as a wow factor for generations of teenagers, especially teenage boys who responded so positively over the decades. It is ironic that my own journey started at 14, like many of the others that we can now account for. We are a beacon of hope for thousands of teenagers who believe that they are alone on the planet. Social media only does so much. Print media remains far more powerful and fights for actual shelf space in the distribution channels. Somehow this subtle marketing message cannot be ignored when a teenager sees us on a shelf of some popular store. This means that the value of our message becomes very public, therefore it counts for so much more.

Rubin

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SPECIAL COLLECTOR'S EDITION 2020

A CELEBRATION OF NOSTALGIA

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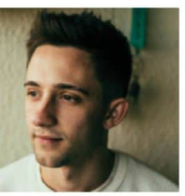
CONTRIBUTORS

ALAN SAMONS
Travel, art, healthy food and all the finer things in life fuel Alan's passions. When not hard at work at *Gay Pages*, he enjoys painting, sculpting, making silver jewellery and reading non-fiction. An inveterate bargain hunter, you'll often find him tracking down his next big find at auctions, flea markets and second-hand bookshops. He needs a bigger house.

LEON VAN NIEROP
Leon is a film critic, broadcaster, writer, producer, radio and TV-presenter, journalist and university professor. He was head of the TUT Film School and published two academic books. He has done a TV-series on the history of Afrikaans film and has written 25 novels, TV series, dramas and radio serials.



CIARAN R. MAIDWELL
Ciaran is a short story writer, television scriptwriter and producer living in Cape Town. He is passionate about literature and the power it has to broaden people's minds and perspectives, especially in relation to gay issues. He enjoys eavesdropping, good grammar and copious amounts of tea.

RYAN THOMAS
Ryan is passionate about the natural world and has an MSc from Wits University in Zoology and Environmental Science. He currently works in the retail sector where he focusses on ensuring that products come from sustainably and responsibly managed sources. Whenever he gets a chance, he loves to travel, visit the theatre or just potter around the garden.

JACQUES BOTHA
Jacques is a chemist, coach and consultant by day, but music makes his heart beat faster. He has been doing music articles and reviews for various publications over the past 15 years. His own music collection "sings" praises to a diverse taste ranging from Rachmaninov to Rammstein to Rihanna. He is also an amateur music composer and fitness instructor.

NEAL MCKENNA
Neal McKenna is a Canadian novelist, magazine writer and editor. He is based on the far side of the Boerewors Curtain, in Pretoria. Lately, life in the 'burbs has been conducive to creativity; and he has begun fiction writing again. This time, he's giving gay male erotica a go. Neal loves animals and shares his life with several canine and feline companions.

SHAWN DONOVAN BRETT
Shawn is an entrepreneur, owner and creator of Brand-Me, a signage and screen-printing company. A passionate fitness and obstacle course race enthusiast, and a self-development fanatic always up for personal challenges, he is an avid motoring enthusiast, spending his days speaking and writing all things cars. He's unable to function without coffee.

JEAN-PIERRE DE LA CHAUMETTE
Our décor and design guru, Jean-Pierre has his finger properly on the pulse. As a publicist and talented interior designer, he is well-placed to search out the latest talent and trends. From the must-haves to the must-sees, Jean-Pierre always ensures that our décor pages are packed with inspiration.

DR PHIL JOFFE
Dr Phil Joffe presented SABC TV's *Body Beat* exercise programme for ten years, continues to teach numerous Yoga and Pilates classes, provides workshops and talks on wellness and fitness, lectures at universities and writes as a freelance journalist.

KEVIN DU PLESSIS
Kevin comes from a background working in the visual arts industry and project management, he is an award-winning photographer, a graphic designer and writer. He has an honours degree in English literature and is dedicated to filling the world with as much gayness as can fit in between the earth and the sun.

MICHELLE YORK
Michelle has been a *Gay Pages* contributor for more years than she will admit to for fear of revealing her age! Her articles concentrate on her two main loves – animals and motoring. She is the newly appointed General Manager of the SA Guild of Motoring Journalists, but she will still remain a contributor. We have no doubt another pet adoption is probably around the corner.

COSTA CARASTAVRAKIS
Costa Carastavrakis is a guy with a story of depression and drugs which led him to nearly throw his life away. He has successfully authored a book on his journey of recovery and is now a speaker. His chatty nature means he always has a lot to say!

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GIVEAWAYS

THE CAPE COUNTRY ROUTES

Cape Country Routes (CCR) South Africa is a leading group of owner-operated and managed accommodation and activity establishments located along popular road travel routes in the Western and Eastern Cape. CCR's collection of more than 20 privately owned hotels, lodges and guest houses, unusual places and attractions and activities and tours are situated on the scenic and historic routes of the Cape. For the best accommodation and a wide range of adventure, wildlife and fun-filled activities for memorable holidays, journeys or adventures-of-a-lifetime Cape Country Routes' exceptional collection has options to suit every taste and budget.

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Eight new subscribers will each receive a 2-night stay for a couple sharing (DBB basis) from one of the eight Cape Country Routes properties listed below. Prizes will all be worth R7000 to R10 000 each and valid until end July 2020.

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Master Saddle maker and dog owner, Rolf Trautwein realised his dream of high-quality accessories for dogs at th,e age of 36 and founded Hunter in 1980. The initially small range of leather accessories made in Germany evolved within just a few years into a diverse product range and the company grew to become a leading brand in the pet industry. With high-quality equipment for dogs and cats, as well as stylish accessories, the family business quickly managed to conquer new market segments.

Hunter products are innovative and manufactured to the highest quality standards. The health and safety of pets is at the heart of all product considerations, yet they do not compromise on appealing and stylish design. Hunter products are timeless, designed to become true classics rather than fleeting trends.

In addition to accessories for everyday life, sport, leisure, hunting and safety, Hunter also offers dog and cat snacks. The range consists of collars, harnesses and leashes for dogs and cats made from different materials, to functional and fashionable dog clothing and beds, as well as care and hygiene items, innovative toys and treats.

Hunter products are available on Takealot, as well as in selected pet shops, supermarkets and veterinary clinics throughout SA.

Six new subscribers will receive a hamper containing a collar, lead, plush toy and two packets of crunchy biscuits valued at R1051,69.

www.huntersa.co.za

EDITION	BOOKING DEADLINE	MATERIAL DEADLINE	PRINT DATE	ON-SALE
Autumn 2020	17 February 2020	18 February	19 February	10 March
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Spring 2020	19 July 2020	20 July	23 July	6 August
Summer 2020	16 September 2020	17 September	18 September	7 October
Special Collector's Edition	26 November 202	27 November	28 November	17 December

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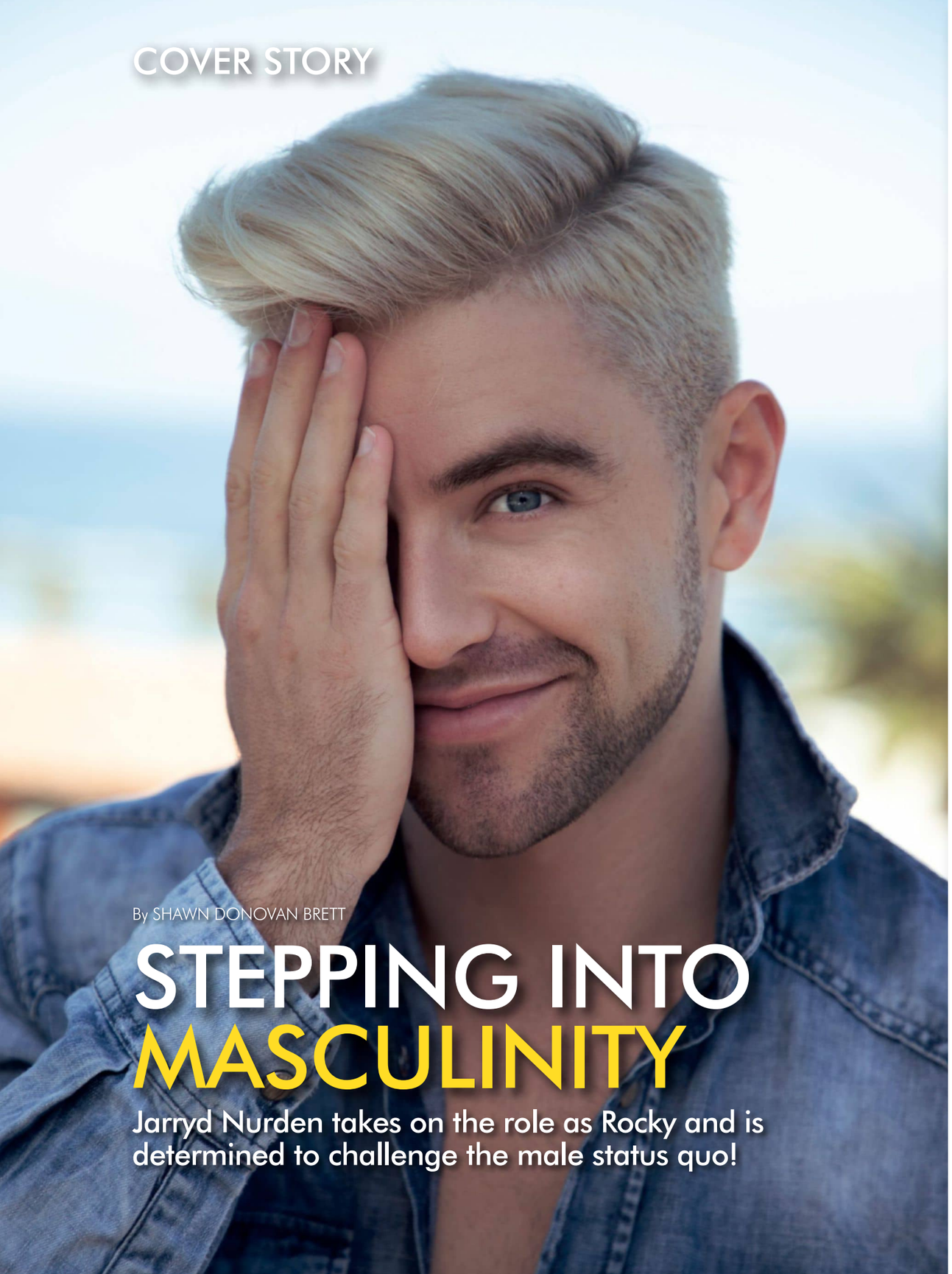


By SHAWN DONOVAN BRETT

STEPPING INTO MASCULINITY

Jarryd Nurden takes on the role as Rocky and is determined to challenge the male status quo!

Richard O'Brien's *Rocky Horror Show* will be making a comeback tour to Johannesburg in 2020 to Montecasino. It promises to be bigger and better than local audiences have ever experienced before. It's the real deal original production. I don't want to give away too many secrets, just know it's going to be a night to remember and the perfect evening to let your hair down, dress up and go out.

A well-seasoned performer and no stranger to the stage, with theatre credits behind his name such as *La Burlesque, Moffie, Jack and The Beanstalk Pantomime, Starlight Express, West Side Story, Cats, Singin' in the Rain, Joseph, Priscilla Queen of the Desert* and *Chicago World Tour*... to name a few. To date his most memorable role was playing the role of Felicia in *Priscilla Queen of the Desert*, she taught him to own your worth and truly shine! Jarryd often finds the characters he plays help him to grow, largely in a personal capacity. So, without a doubt Jarryd is the man to take on the role of the newly born, naïve Rocky. Being featured as the title role of Rocky is even more special to him – it's another dream show he has always wanted to be in and a role that has become so significant at this time in his life.

His attraction to the character lies in the fact that Rocky challenges the 'ideal man', with half of a recycled brain and a muscular body, he displays intuition, deep empathy and kindness. What Jarryd loves about playing Rocky is that there is a challenge to step into adult masculinity, a sexual energy, to not act like a boy, straight guy, or act gay, but simply be the essence of a true man. A gentleman, stepping into his masculine energy and grounding a performance from that space. The role of Rocky has taught Jarryd to trust the process, trust himself, trust the material and have faith that his performance will deliver to his best expectations.

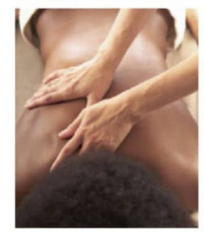
We are so often conditioned by the stereotypes to be a straight man or a gay man. Straight men are often perceived as super masculine while gay men are seen as feminine, and this is all a warped general perception. Times are changing and we are collectively being challenged to understand both sides of ourselves as men, regardless of sexual preference. Rocky has a deep love for a transvestite, yet really falls for Janet in a pure way. He is who he is. Unapologetically.

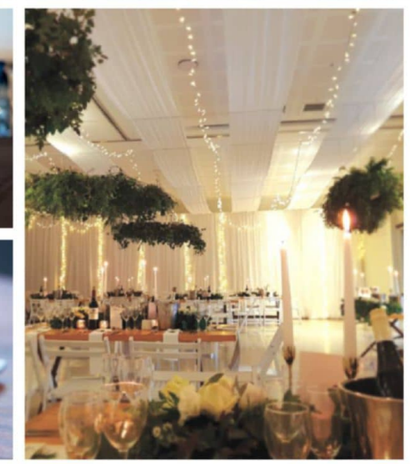
Photography by
Ruan Jooste
@rjoostephotography
Jarryd Nurden
@jarrydnurden

The show life is not for the faint-hearted, with busy show days, travelling and a constant change in routine, it can be a challenge to find balance in the joyous chaos. Jarryd turns to transcendental meditation – it has been the biggest gamechanger for him – as well as his spiritual guru, Alaia who helps in keeping him on track. He also prides himself in a special group of friends who offer support and guidance when the going gets tough and homesickness sets deep within.

"Getting the cover of the *Gay Pages* is a dream come true for me. I'm a proud gay man and it's so important, especially nowadays to create a healthy gay culture and lifestyle for the generations to come to look up to. It feels surreal to me. Being a small-town farm boy from KZN and growing up in a time where living your truth wasn't the go to, coming across a magazine like the *Gay Pages* with class and elegance gave me hope for the bubbling truth that was hidden beneath the surface. There, in an Exclusive Books, peering at the top shelf where the magazine stood, I found my inspiration, my little sign of hope that I too wasn't alone and that there were people out there who felt the way I felt, truly deep inside and where living happily and proudly excited me. So, thank you *Gay Pages* for continuing a legacy and for keeping our community together with heads held high here in South Africa. I am honoured to be on the cover and to feature in this issue for that very same reason, to inspire all men and gay men to live their truth, be kind, live with integrity, dignity and faith and trust that we all have a purpose in this life. All we need to do is go within to find it and to dream as big as you want to dream because they do come true!"

ROYAL ST. ANDREWS
HOTEL | PORT ALFRED
GRACIOUS HOSPITALITY





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CENTENNIAL CHEERS

Alto Wine Estate celebrates 100 years of winemaking this year. More than a milestone, the occasion recalls the proud story of a Stellenbosch champion and the people involved. Few wineries ever attain, and retain, the level of trust that Alto has. The estate's wines are enjoyed worldwide whether at fine dining restaurants or at home with friends.

The Alto story is littered with local and international awards – the excellence of the Alto Rouge was re-affirmed at the prestigious 2019 Veritas Awards by being awarded a Gold medal for the 2017 vintage. As the longest running and biggest competition in South Africa, Veritas has earned its reputation as one of South Africa's most authoritative and credible competitions for market-ready wines. Wines are tasted blind by panels that consist of local and international experts. Alto Rouge is indeed the sum of the estate's history, sublime terroir, passion and meticulous craft – a legendary blend of Cabernet Franc, Shiraz, Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, and Petit Verdot.

Available from the Vinoteque at R95 per bottle, it is priced at the lowest tier, consistent awards demonstrate this wine's exceptional value and how high Alto sets the bar on quality.

www.alto.co.za

A VIVACIOUS TONIC

Fitch & Leedes Grapefruit Tonic definitely hits the spot with a flurry of zesty grapefruit combined with delicate hints of bitterness. Stepping out in style with a brand-new retro look, the Grapefruit Tonic struts its stuff in style in a glass bottle sealed with a crown cap and embossed with the signature Fitch & Leedes sailing ship.

This versatile grapefruit tonic takes you from day to night. Enjoy it while basking in the sun, at a sophisticated upmarket venue for sundowners and everywhere in between. The vivacious tonic is a breath of fresh air when paired with premium gin, vodka or tequila.

www.fitchleedes.co.za

THE TEMPLE OF TASTE

It's located in a centuries-old former temple with contemporary sculpture in the central courtyard, and serves European dishes made with local ingredients alongside a 950-strong wine list. And now Beijing's TRB Hutong has got the seal of approval of TripAdvisor users, whose positive ratings have won it the title of best fine dining restaurant in the world from the reviews aggregator. The Beijing restaurant, which charges from 688RMB (R1450) for a five-course menu, has come top of the website's annual Travelers' Choice rankings, which are based on the millions of reviews and ratings left by *TripAdvisor* users over the past year.

www.trb-hutong.com

A RIVETING ADDITION TO THE MENTORS RANGE

The KWV range of elite wines that is renowned as The Mentors has a new and auspicious member. The Mentors Carménère 2017 joins a rare breed – a pinnacle in winemaking reserved for the finest in class. It took three years of trial and error before the single variety Carménère satisfied the range's stringent standards. Now, it proudly represents the ethos of this special clan as a wine that is as exceptional as it is intensely curious and though-provoking.

The Mentors range was established to be a premier showcase of South Africa's diverse terroir, involving strict and ruthless selection and the application of the best viticultural and oenological know-how through to a dedicated cellar. This is about small batch wines and the truly refined art of winemaking. The wine is full-bodied and characterised by notes of fresh raspberry, cumin and green peppercorn and hints of plum and vanilla. It is fresh and lively with soft integrated tannins. On the palate, the wine is succulent and infinitely well balanced.

www.kwv.co.za

5-STAR RICKETY BRIDGE

Rickety Bridge, the picturesque wine estate in the Franschhoek Valley, has been honoured with a coveted 5-Star rating and Joint Best Semillon Award in the *2020 Platter's South African Wine Guide* – for The Pilgrimage 2017, a limited-edition Icon wine produced from an extraordinary heritage vineyard block. *Platter*'s 5-star accolade is reserved for wines that are "South African classics" and score 95 points or more on the internationally recognised 100-point scale. No stranger to accolades, The Pilgrimage 2017 has also received ratings of excellence from Tim Atkin, internationally acclaimed wine critic and British Master of Wine (MW) in his *2019 South Africa Special Report* (94 points) as well as Christian Eedes, well respected wine writer and judge and editor of *Winemag.co.za* (95 points).

The Pilgrimage is crafted from a 4,2-hectare block planted in 1905 on granite soils in the Franschhoek valley. Ancient gnarled and twisted dryland bush vines struggle to produce tiny yields of grapes, averaging 2,4 tonnes/ha. The Pilgrimage pays homage to the long and arduous journey these ancient heritage vines have travelled since 1905.

Ready to drink now, this wine has great aging potential for up to at least 10 years from harvest. It's a wine made to last and improve with age, but you'd have to move quickly – only 1 600 bottles were produced.

The Pilgrimage 2017 is available at approximately R450 per bottle from the cellar door, at specialist wine merchants or shop online at *shop.ricketybridge.com/wines*.

FROM VINE TO DESIGN AT LOUISVALE

Enveloped by the hills of Devon Valley, and just outside Stellenbosch lies an unusually striking building. This is the home of Louisvale wine farm and function venue.

The building was designed by award-winning architect, Christof Albertyn and represents the mixture of African and European building traditions. It is inspired by the Khoekhoen who built the first man-made domed structure in the area, and the white gabled Cape Dutch style, that had been introduced by European Colonialists in the 17th Century, and which is the original homestead built in 1924.

The two buildings are married by a floating glass arch and together they frame the 280-degree views of the three million-year-old Cape Mountains. With the most magnificent vistas and stunning surroundings, Louisvale offers the perfect setting for weddings, corporate events or any celebration, and can accommodate up to 150 guests. Louisvale started producing wines in 1988 and prides itself on its signature award winning chardonnay wines and for being one of South Africa's pioneers of this cultivar. Louisvale is passionate about the "Art of Chardonnay" and is tirelessly committed to the task of crafting and creating some exceptional Chardonnay wines.

The restaurant at Louisvale focusses on dishes that feature only fresh produce, so as the seasons change, so do the menus. Executive chef Kirstie du Toit studied at The Culinary Academy at Backsberg and comes from a family of bakers and farmers. She and her team are dedicated to delighting and tantalising your palate with original and delicious homemade food.

www.louisvalewine.com

THE TRADITIONAL VEGAN

"People frequently ask why we make vegan products that look and taste like meat. Our answer is that many vegans grew up eating meat, but then made the ethical decision to stop using products derived from animals," says Anneke Malan of HERBI VŌHR.

All the HERBI VŌHR products have been created to enable one to easily 'veganise' most traditional dishes, in order to help you transition to a cruelty-free lifestyle while still enjoying the tastes you were accustomed to.

Biltong is often quoted by South African vegans as the food they miss most. HERBI VŌHR's biltong is described by many as the best vegan biltong in the country, and it has frequently fooled even meat eaters. It comes in three flavours – regular, spicy and chilli, and is offered either sliced or whole

At the *Gay Pages*, we have been having some fun trying out HERBI VŌHR's mouth-watering products and we are pleasantly surprised, to put it mildly. The ribs are divine and if you take the boerewors to your next braai, we don't think anyone will be able to easily tell the difference between meat and non-meat boerewors. Yum!

Pop over their Facebook page at *www.facebook.com/herbi-vohr* for more information and stockists, or check out their website at *www.herbivohr.wixsite.com/herbivohr.*

CLASSIQUE CELLAR ESSENTIALS

Sparkling wines are meant to be enjoyed year-round, but during the holiday season bubbly consumption usually peaks; whether you're toasting the new year or bringing a gift to a party, chances are you'll be shopping for a bottle.

The Kleine Zalze Méthode Cap Classique Chardonnay Pinot Noir Vintage Brut 2013 is an old-world style sparkling wine crafted from the finest selected parcels of Chardonnay and Pinot Noir. Bottle fermented and matured for four years prior to disgorgement; Chardonnay contributes elegance whilst Pinot Noir provides intensity and richness.

The Kleine Zalze Méthode Cap Classique Chardonnay Pinot Noir Vintage Brut 2013 is a full-bodied Méthode Cap Classique and pairs perfectly with oysters, fresh pan-seared fish or a cheese board.

The Kleine Zalze Méthode Cap Classique Chardonnay Pinot Noir Vintage Brut 2013 is available at select specialist wine outlets, and at the cellar at R225 per bottle.

www.kleinezalze.co.za

THE PERFECTLY BALANCED AMBER

Just in time for endless summer days, Bloedlemoen Gin has added a new variant to their collection. Bloedlemoen Amber, now available nationwide at all good liquor stores, is made with the same ten botanicals as the Classic, along with an exclusive selection of locally forged fynbos and honeybush to create a perfectly-balanced, unique gin infusion. Bloedlemoen is the first Blood Orange Gin in the world and the fruit is locally-sourced from growing partners in the Cape. It's a contemporary, London Dry-style gin distilled using ten botanicals through a combination of maceration and vapour infusion.

The result is a premium, small batch gin that cuts no corners when it comes to quality and consistency, despite its humble beginnings. Recommended retail price is R399 per bottle at all good bottle stores for both Bloedlemoen Original and Bloedlemoen Amber.

www.trumanandorange.com

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DARE TO GO BARE!

It used to be that clothing optional resorts were only for the super liberal, but times have changed and if you haven't been to a nudist resort yet, give it a try.
In SA there are but a handful of clothing optional places for gay men to visit. But, if you do, remember that its normal to be shy at first. In no time you will be relaxed and forget that you're in the nod. And no, its not just for guys with gym-toned physiques – all shapes and sizes are welcome. And no-one will stare, laugh or point. That's bad manners. Though they might stare if you are hung like Dirk Diggler…
Being naked is a great reminder of how similar we all truly are beneath our daily attire, and that helps break down everybody's walls. Self-doubt will go right out the window at a nudist camp. You'll end up befriending people who would normally feel out of your social reach.
There are actually a few great health benefits to being nude under the open sky as well. For starters, your boys will thank you. Tight designer underwear might look and feel sexy, but your junk wasn't made to be all squashed together unable to breathe. There's also an added benefit of vitamin D that we get from sunlight. And, all that fresh air and sunlight makes guys rather frisky…
Liberate yourself from your inhibitions and dare to go bare!

ANA ALL THE WAY

Japan has a comprehensive domestic air travel network, but a lot of people never use it. Instead, many travelers, especially those from overseas, opt to get around by train, due in no small part to the extremely attractive rail passes available in Japan. But Japanese airline ANA is getting set to offer a special travel pass of its own, and one that comes with an extremely nice bonus: it can take care of all your hotel fees for an entire month!
The pass, which has yet to be given an official name, is a partnership between ANA and Tokyo-based travel provider Address. Address offers accommodations in refurbished, unoccupied homes and vacation properties across Japan, with clients able to spend as many nights as they want in Address accommodations for a flat monthly fee. The ANA/Address pass will give purchasers access to any and all Address properties, and also four air tickets on ANA domestic routes. Exact pricing details are yet to be announced, but are expected to be in the 60 000-70 000 yen (approximately US$555-US$650) range, a modest premium over the current 40 000-yen per-month cost for Address accommodation-only service. As an added bonus for independent travelers seeking unique experiences, many of Address' properties are located outside of major city centres, in communities that are experiencing population declines and could definitely use more visitors.

ANCHORS AWEIGH, BOYS

A cruise can be one of the most magical of holiday experiences, but it's a sad truth for LGBTQ travellers that life aboard many mainstream cruise lines can feel isolating and restrictive. Being stuck on the high seas with retirees and families with children can be annoying at best.
For years gay cruises were limited to a couple of specialist companies, but now, Richard Branson's Virgin Voyages – the new mainstream cruise line created by Virgin Group – will see its flagship, Scarlet Lady, take its maiden voyage from Miami to the Caribbean in 2020. It aims to be one of the most queer-friendly cruise liners to hit the high seas. Branson intends the cruise line to play a significant part in securing a healthy future for the ocean by launching one of the cleanest fleets at sea and making a positive impact on the communities and ports Virgin visits. During her inaugural season, the Scarlet Lady will sail Caribbean waters, giving guests the option of four- and five-night itineraries featuring a five-night Mayan Sol voyage to Costa Maya, Mexico; and five-night Dominican Daze voyages to Puerto Plata, Dominican Republic. Each sailing will feature a stop in Bimini, Bahamas, where Virgin Voyages guests can experience the Beach Club at Bimini.
In an age when the safety of LGBTQ travellers feels under threat, it's comforting to know that one mainstream cruise line is dedicated to keeping the waves friendly for all.
www.virginvoyages.com

ROYAL ST ANDREWS

The stunning and elegant Royal St Andrews Hotel, set in a leafy suburb of Port Alfred, is part Tudor splendour with a modern contemporary wing and conference centre. The complex is tied together by a large courtyard affording easy access to all facilities.
The Highlander Pub is perfect for informal get togethers and has all the charm of an English village tavern.
The conference facilities are the most advanced in the region and are ideal for conferences, corporate events, weddings, as well as car and brand launches. The breakaway rooms are well-equipped, and catering is superb.
Breakfasts are served in the relaxing Paper Nautilus breakfast room. More formal, dinner can be enjoyed in the elegant Thistle Restaurant, with its excellent cuisine, award-wining wines and fabulous service to match.
General manager, Difford Louw, has reason to be proud – the Royal St Andrews Hotel recently scored a hat trick by winning the prestigious 2019 Lilizela Award for the Top 4 Star Hotel in the Eastern Cape for the third consecutive year, and also the 2019 Diners Club Diamond Wine List Award, for the second consecutive year.
A highlight of any stay is a river boat up the scenic Kowie River for a picnic. Canoes can also be hired for a fun diversion. The Royal Port Alfred Golf Course provides some outdoor exercise, while the CSpa by Camelot is ideal for more sedentary guests.
Port Alfred is unique, and the Royal St Andrews Hotel is the perfect one-stop and full-service destination for corporate and general conferencing.
In a nutshell, in one coastal town you will find a truly world-class hotel with fantastic facilities and service, and a wide range of leisure options, both on land and on water.
www.royalstandrewshotel.co.za

ART AND CULTURE IN NYC

LGBTQ art and history are celebrated with temporary shows at museums all over New York, but only the Leslie-Lohman Museum invites you to take in works by and about queer artists all year long. The museum's namesake founders, Fritz Lohman and Charles Leslie, began their collection in 1969. Visitors can see an array of exhibitions in the museum's Soho space on Wooster and Grand Streets, home to year-round events and ever-changing window installations.
While public art abounds across the city, you'll have to head to the tiny triangle that is Christopher Park to see NYC's only LGBTQ-inspired works. The park is pleasantly quiet thanks to the trees that separate it from the bustling streets all around. So, duck in for a spot on a park bench and regard George Segal's 1980 Gay Liberation sculptures of two same-sex couples casually standing and seated, representing some of the world's first public art dedicated to LGBTQ rights.
www.leslielohman.org
www.nycgovparks.org/parks/christopher-park

SOAK UP SOUTH BEACH

The new AxelBeach Miami gives LGBTQ travellers the sexy South Beach experience of their dreams. Since the company opened its first hotel in Barcelona over 15 years ago, Axel Hotels have become trusted safe spaces for international gay travellers. Axel is also the first LGBTQ hotel chain to tout itself as "hetero-friendly," making it truly inclusive. Now the chic boutique hotel chain has opened its first U.S. location in Miami Beach, Florida.
AxelBeach Miami is located a block from the shore in the heart of South Beach, in Miami Beach's famous Art Deco District. This lively locale is perfect for those who really want to soak in the true South Beach experience. The hotel is within walking distance from some of the area's best-known nightclubs and bars. Several of Miami Beach's sexiest queer clubs, like Twist, Palace, and Club Boi, are close by.
If you prefer to stay in, the Axel's lounge bar is always popping and its super-chic Sky Bar by the pool overlooking Washington Avenue is the place to be, day or night. There, you can mingle with sexy and interesting locals and travellers over bumping Latin beats, with a delicious craft cocktail in hand. You don't have to be a high roller to stay here. The hotel has 160 rooms, and even its largest suite typically goes for under $300 per night.
www.axelhotels.com

A MAGICAL GAY ROCK

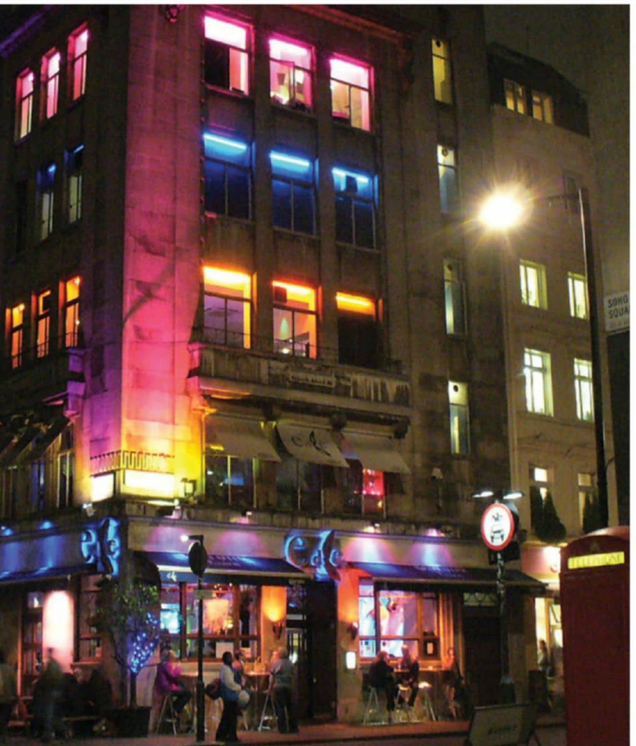
The Greek island of Mykonos is a very large rock in the middle of the Aegean Sea. Everything, from bottled water, to champagne, and men, is imported.

Beyond the chic white-washed town and soft sandy beaches the island has few other attractions. But that's the point – you come to Mykonos to hit the beach, enjoy the restaurants and to see (and be seen) in the bars.

By day, gay visitors soak up the sun on the island's two main gay-popular beaches, Elia and Super Paradise. Elia Beach is the most popular. During July and August, the beach attracts a thousand or more guys every day. The gay beach area is also remarkably peaceful.

Sun loungers and sunshades are available for rent and Elia Beach Restaurant offers an extensive menu including excellent fresh fish. At the far end of Elia beach, there is a cruising area that gets rather busy in the early evening.

Super Paradise, as a gay-popular beach, has enjoyed a renaissance in recent years with the opening of the very gay Jackie's Beach Bar. As the day progresses, Super Paradise come alive with music and a party atmosphere takes over. When it comes to nightlife, Mykonos attracts so many gay travellers that it can sometimes feel the whole town is part of the scene. Though it lacks big dance clubs, gay nightlife is a hedonistic all-night experience attracting the beautiful and rich from around the world. Dress to impress and be prepared to start late – most bars don't get going until after midnight. Accommodation-wise, the hotels can be a bit pricey in comparison with Ibiza or Sitges. Mykonos Town offers an astonishing range of restaurants and the culinary diversity in this small town is truly remarkable. Though a holiday on the magical island of Mykonos can never be called cheap, it certainly is worth saving up for.



THE HEART OF THE GAYBOURHOOD

Soho is the UK's biggest gaybourhood. It's right in the heart of London, nestled between Mayfair and Covent Garden. In the centre of Soho you'll find Soho Square: a great place to sit and have a drink in summer. Surrounding Soho Square you'll find many of London's most famous gay bars. This part of the city has long been a haven for gay people and bohemians. By the post-war era it was packed with brothels, underground drinking dens, cruising areas and gay bars.

Start or end your night with drinks at The Yard, then perhaps pop in to check out the action at Sweatbox Sauna.

G-A-Y is an institution in both London and Manchester. It's located on Old Compton Street and you can't miss the garish pink sign emblazoned on the door and the staff are often outside trying to beckon you in with drinks tokens and wristbands. Inside you'll see music videos on every wall and camp gay hits blaring. G-A-Y Bar tends to attract a younger crowd. It has also attracted some of the biggest stars in music: it's one of the only small venues to host intimate gigs by megastars like Lady Gaga and Madonna. As the night progresses, party people head a little further up the road to G-A-Y Late.

A staple on the Soho gay scene, Village has been going since 1991 and has been a big draw for the bright young things of Soho ever since. It's just across the road from The Yard, so ideal for bar hopping. Village Soho hosts some of London's finest go-go dancers.

A classy cocktail bar in the heart of gay Soho, Freedom Bar Soho is a good choice if you're looking for a slightly more sophisticated night out. It is popular with West End performers, so you might rub shoulders with a well-known actor or two.

Ku Bar is just across the road in China Town, and is the perfect spot to get down and shake your tush. The bartenders are incredibly good looking and invariably shirtless.

Circa has established itself as one of Soho's best gay bars and mostly attracts well-dressed 20- and 30-somethings. At weekends it can get packed, as it's quite a small space. Circa is open until 1am seven days a week – just when it's time to either go home, or hop on over to one of the other clubs.

INTERNATIONAL EVENTS

JANUARY

- Aspen. 12 – 19 January. Gay and Lesbian Ski Week.
- Washington D.C. 17–19 January. Mid Atlantic Leather Weekend.
- Hamburg. 17 – 19 January. Bärenpaadjiie.
- Arosa. 18 – 25 January. Arosa Ski Week.
- Miami. 19 – 26 January. Atlantis Oasis All Gay Cruise.
- Melbourne. 19 January – 2 February. Midsumma.
- Vienna. 25 January. RegenbogenBall.
- Puerto Vallarta. 26 January – 2 February. Beef Dip Bear Week.
- Vancouver. 26 January – 2 February. Gay Whistler Ski Week.
- Playa del Carmen. 29 January – 3 February. Arena Dance Music Festival.

FEBRUARY

- Fort Lauderdale. 9 – 16 February. RSVP Caribbean Cruise.
- Reykjavik. 13 – 16 February. Rainbows Winter Festival.
- Sydney. 14 February – 1 March. Mardi Gras.
- Auckland. 14 – 26 February. Atlantis Sydney Gay Cruise.
- Sitges. 18 – 26 February. Sitges Carnival.
- New Orleans. 20 – 25 February. Gay Mardi Gras.
- Rio de Janeiro. 21 – 26 February. Carnival Rio.
- Sydney. 29 February. Mardi Gras Parade.

MARCH

- Antwerp. 4 – 9 March. Darklands Fest Belgium.
- Miami. 4 – 10 March. Winter Party.
- Stockholm. 7 March. Melodifestivalen Final.
- Tignes. 14 – 21 March. European Snow Pride.
- Mammoth Lakes. 18 – 22 March. Elevation Mammoth Gay Ski Week.
- Amsterdam. 19 – 23 March. Amsterdam Bear weekend.
- Les Arcs. 21 – 28 March. European Gay Ski Week.
- Sölden. 21 – 28 March. Gay Snow Happening.
- San Juan. 21 – 28 March. Atlantis Southern Caribbean Gay Cruise.
- Miami. 30 March – 5 April. Miami Beach Gay Pride.

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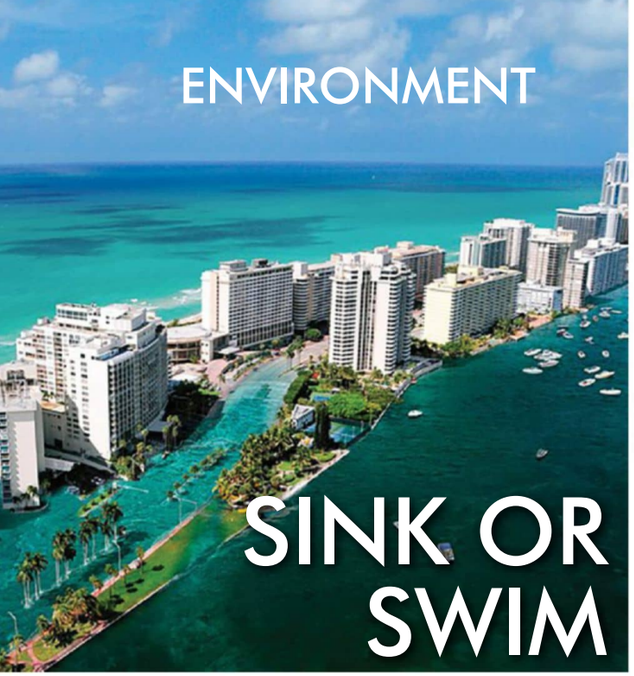


SINK OR SWIM

A landmark UN report warns sea levels will rise faster than projected by 2100. *CNN* recently reported that cities from New York to Shanghai could see regular flooding, as sea levels rise faster than previously thought. Glaciers and ice sheets from the Himalayas to Antarctica are rapidly melting and the fisheries that feed millions of people are shrinking. These are just some of the impacts that emissions of greenhouse gases have already triggered across the planet's oceans and frozen regions, according to a new landmark report from the United Nations' Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). More than 100 scientists from 36 countries worked on the report – titled the *Special Report on the Ocean and Cryosphere in a Changing Climate*.

The report found that the world may only have until 2030 to keep global warming below 1,5 degrees. This new report paints a full and alarming picture of the rapid thawing happening in frozen regions all across the globe, and how the changes will dramatically alter human civilization in the coming decades. The findings show that the planet's warming is accelerating melting in glaciers and ice sheets from Greenland to Antarctica, and that sea levels will likely rise more than previously projected by the end of this century. The choices made now are critical to limit the future impacts, and avoid the escalating costs and risks that come with delayed action, the report says.

www.ipcc.ch/srocc/home

NOW THAT'S THE TEA

The average person now ingests five grams of plastic each week, the equivalent of a credit card, a new report by WWF has discovered.

Researchers have found that people are consuming up to 102 000 tiny pieces of plastic of less than 1mm – 250 grams each year – with nearly 90 per cent coming from water, both bottled and tap.

Other foods with highest plastic levels include shellfish, beer and salt.

The new figures were compiled by researchers at the University of Newcastle in Australia who analysed more than 50 studies on the ingestion of plastic by people. It found that globally the average person consumes up to 1 769 particles of plastic each week from water, 182 from shellfish, 11 pieces from salt and 10 from beer.

Many people are trying to reduce their plastic use, but some tea manufacturers are moving in the opposite direction: replacing traditional paper teabags with plastic ones. Now, researchers have discovered that a soothing cup of the brewed beverage may come with a dose of micro- and nano-sized plastics shed from the bags. Possible health effects of ingesting these particles are currently unknown, the researchers say.

www.wwf.org

THE PAST BENEATH OUR FEET

by RYAN THOMAS

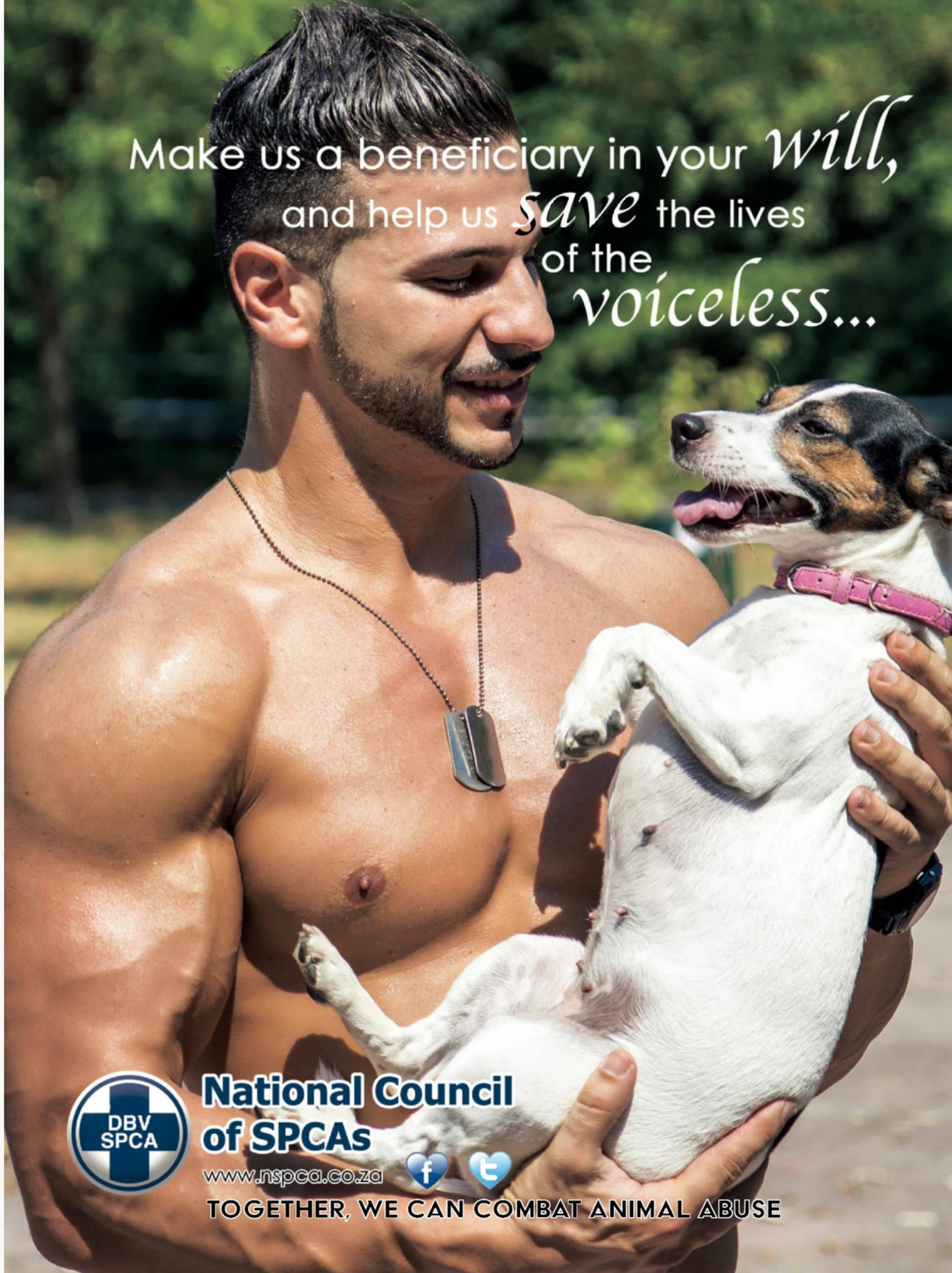
Do you ever imagine what is buried beneath your feet? Or maybe wonder about how far down you'd have to go before you struck something valuable, or even lifechanging, at the spot where you are right now? What you can be sure of, is millions of years of geological turmoil, beautiful landscapes and fascinating lifeforms lie captured beneath you. The earth is about 4,5 billion years old and South Africa's "rock record" extends from present day back to about 3,5 billion years ago. Ponder for a moment, that if you ever venture to the top of Table Mountain in Cape Town, you would have actually been at sea level 300 million years ago and not atop one of the world's oldest mountains.

South Africa also had fascinating biodiversity back in the day and is a great place to look for fossils stretching from before the Triassic (250 million years ago) through to the more recently fossilised hominids, such as Mrs Ples (2 million years ago).

Pareiasaurs, which went extinct about 250 million years ago were one of the first fossils discovered in South Africa (1838) and we have a lot of them, up to 24 different species. Other, more recent, discoveries include waterweed and coelacanth fossils discovered by Dr Rob Gess in a 360 million-year-old lagoon which is now home to Grahamstown.

To celebrate southern Africa's rich palaeontological history, the South African Mint recently launched its next series of R25 coins as part of its Natura Palaeontology Collection, named The Rise of the Dinosaurs.

Whether it's on a coin or in stone, combining your imagination with the imprints of life gone by are all that lie between where you stand now and the past beneath your feet.



CHECK YOUR NADS

IMPORTANCE OF NUTRITION

A lack of essential nutrients is known to contribute to the onset of poor mental health in people suffering from anxiety and depression, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia and ADHD. Nutritional psychiatry is a growing discipline that focuses on the use of food and supplements to provide these essential nutrients as part of an integrated or alternative treatment for mental health disorders.

The link between poor mental health and nutritional deficiencies has long been recognised by nutritionists working in the complementary health sector. However, psychiatrists are only now becoming increasingly aware of the benefits of using nutritional approaches to mental health.

It is now known that many mental health conditions are caused by inflammation in the brain which ultimately causes our brain cells to die. This inflammatory response starts in our gut and is associated with a lack of nutrients from our food such as magnesium, omega-3 fatty acids, probiotics, vitamins and minerals that are all essential for the optimum functioning of our bodies.

Recent research has shown that food supplements such as zinc, magnesium, omega 3, and vitamins B and D3 can help improve people's mood, relieve anxiety and depression and improve the mental capacity of people with Alzheimer's. For people who have not responded to prescription drugs or who cannot tolerate the side effects, nutritional intervention can offer hope for the future.

Medical education has traditionally excluded nutritional knowledge and its association with disease and very few doctors have a proper understanding of the importance of nutrition. But as the evidence mounts up, it is time for medical education to take nutrition seriously so that GPs and psychiatrists of the future know as much about its role in good health as they do about anatomy and physiology. The state of our mental health could depend on it.

Testicular cancer is a threat men have to face, but some self-checking might just help you spotting a potential problem before it becomes life-threatening.

Luckily, men are usually very intimately aware of what's going on down there, which helps. Cancer can happen to anyone whether young or old. It can happen at any time. Testicular cancer is one of the most common cancers among young men, yet many are unfamiliar with the disease and how easily they can play a role in detecting it. Although survival rates for all stages of the disease are relatively high, patients diagnosed later often have to undergo chemotherapy and radiation. Spotting it early means it can be taken care of with surgery alone.

Signs and symptoms of testicular cancer can present as a lump or enlargement in either testicle. You could also experience a dull ache in the abdomen or groin. Sometimes a small lump or some swelling will cause no pain at all.

Get to know your anatomy. Keep in mind that one testicle might be larger than the other and one usually hangs lower (often on the left). It's easy to mistake the epididymis for an unusual mass. The epididymis is a coiled set of tubes that lines the back and top of each testicle. It's the portion of the reproductive system where the sperm "mature" or learn to swim. It will feel softer and lumpier than the testicle it's attached to.

Here's how to perform a self-exam.

Conduct a self-inspection in the shower. The heat will relax the scrotum and the muscles holding the testicles, making an exam easier. Starting with one side, gently roll the scrotum with your fingers to feel the surface of the testicle. Check for any lumps, bumps or unusual features. Cancerous tumours typically aren't painful. Take note of any changes in size over time. While the most common symptom of testicular cancer is a painless mass, some men experience swelling of the testicles and scrotum.

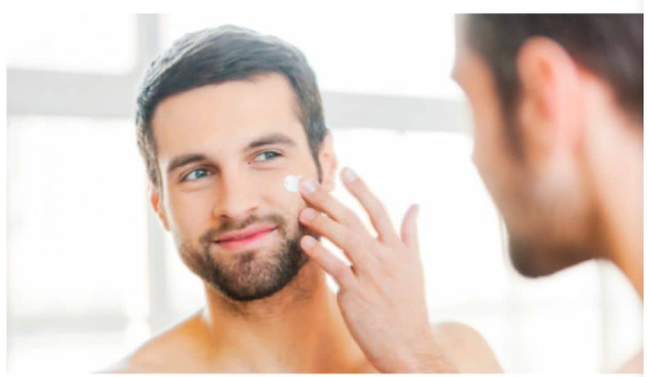
Check yourself once a month and if you do find anything out of the ordinary, see your doctor as soon as you can.

SINFUL SUN DAMAGE

You think the sun's only dangerous on holiday, but the sun can damage your skin over time, even when driving or sitting at your desk.

Overexposure is the swiftest way to skin cancer, which is why if you're not covered up, you need to slather on sunblock. Sunlight causes for everything from crow's feet to dark spots, and once the damage is done, it can't be reversed. Do your 10-years-from-now self a favour and use a face cream with some protection (SPF 30 is good) every single day, even when it's cloudy.

There really is no such thing as a healthy tan!



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UK

WORLDPRIDE 2023

World Pride is the largest global gathering of LGBTIQ communities and a different city hosts the event every two years. Members of the worldwide InterPride network of Pride organisations voted between three contenders – Sydney, Montréal and Houston – as host city for WorldPride 2023.
The final results were Sydney 60%, Montreal 36% and Houston 3%. InterPride announced Sydney's win in Athens, Greece at their annual AGM.
Sydney WorldPride will be held over February and March in 2023, to coincide with that year's 45th anniversary Mardi Gras. This will be the first time ever WorldPride has come to the Southern Hemisphere and the Asia-Pacific region.
Every WorldPride features four staple events: an opening ceremony, a closing ceremony, a Pride march and a human rights conference attracting at least 1000 delegates.
A WorldPride in Sydney has the potential to attract over 1 million attendees, Mardi Gras said.
www.interpride.org/worldpride

UK

MR GAY EUROPE

The city upon the River Tyne in England has just been named the friendliest city in the UK and the 14th edition of the Mr Gay Europe competition will be part of the UK Pride 2020 and the winner will be announced on the Pride stage Saturday 18 July.
The 2020 competition will follow the well-known MGE framework, but the enthusiastic and creative production team will also add some new elements and will give the Newcastle event its own flair.
"We at the international MGE team are happy and delighted that a previous delegate and team member has taken upon himself the task to produce a finale, with a team of well-qualified co-producers," said MGE president Tore Aasheim.
"As a former Mr Gay World winner, current national producer of three participating countries and a past Mr Gay Europe Managing Director, I am looking forward to channelling my experiences to bringing the Mr Gay Europe finals to my home region in 2020," said MGE 2020 producer Stuart Hatton Jr.
The European finale takes place 14 – 19 July 2020 during UK Pride that next summer takes place in Newcastle.
www.mrgayeurope.com

AUSTRALIA

BONDS BOYS

A Bonds ad showing a real-life gay couple kissing has been applauded on social media, but sadly not everybody's loving it. The ad shows the two shirtless men passionately kissing against a counter-top in matching underwear.
"It's the little moments that make Christmas season so special," the caption reads.
The photo was uploaded on the brand's social media pages and was met with a mixed response.
Over 8000 people have liked the ad on Bonds' Facebook page, despite some homophobic criticism.
"Well done Bonds! Spread the love!" one commenter wrote.
"So incredible to see representation as it should be," another added. "This is a beautiful ad, for all the haters, you have your own issue to deal with."
Another wrote: "Totally back this, ads show couples all the time, so why not show a gay couple? My next question is where the lesbians at?"
Emily Small, general manager of Bonds' parent company Hanes apparel, said the campaign "celebrates the bonds that make the season and those are different for every individual."
We at Gay Pages LOVE it! So, when will the bulk of South African advertisers wake up? It's a question we've asked for the past 25 years.

GERMANY

CONVERSIONS CONSIDERED?

Germany is considering legislation to ban conversion therapy for minors and restrict it for adults. Health Minister Jens Spahn, who is gay, released the draft of a bill to this effect.
It would ban use of the practice, designed to turn LGBTQ people straight or cisgender, on people under 18. Adults could still undergo such therapy unless they were deceived, coerced, or threatened into doing so. And people aged 16 to 18 could undergo the therapy if they could show they understood its implications.
Being LGBTQ "is not a disease," Spahn told German media outlets. "A ban also sends an important societal signal to all those who are struggling with their homosexuality: 'You're OK just as you are,'" he added.
Conversion therapy has been condemned as ineffective and harmful by every major U.S. health group and by many in other countries. Studies indicate it leads to depression and is associated with an increased risk of suicide.
Parliament will probably vote on the bill soon, but it hasn't been scheduled for consideration yet.
Malta, Ecuador, Brazil, and Taiwan all have nationwide bans on conversion therapy. The U.K., Australia, and parts of Canada are considering such bans. The South African Society of Psychiatrists states that "there is no scientific evidence that reparative or conversion therapy is effective in changing a person's sexual orientation. There is, however, evidence that this type of therapy can be destructive".
Conversion therapy is, however, not illegal in the country. In February 2015, owners of a conversion therapy camp were found guilty of murder, child abuse and assault with intent to do grievous bodily harm after three teens were found dead at the camp. The teens, reportedly, were punched, beaten with spades and rubber pipes, chained to their beds, not allowed to use the toilets at any time and were forced to eat soap and their own faeces, all with the aim of 'curing' their homosexuality. The three teens were between 15 and 19 years old.

UK

HOMOEROTIC REBOOT

The new *Dracula* reboot will show the count enjoying both men and women.
The iconic vampire is being turned into a seductive bisexual bloodsucker for a new Netflix/BBC series. The title character will be played by Danish actor Claes Bang and he will devour both men and women alike. In a teaser trailer, Dracula can be seen gently caressing the face of a young man and cooing, "Try and stay calm, you're doing very well."

DENMARK

GAY MARRIAGE PIONEERS

History was made 30 years ago on October 1, 1989, when Denmark became the first country in the world to allow same-sex couples to tie the knot.
The trailblazing move was the culmination of a 40-year campaign by Danish civil rights activists, and it would spearhead the equal marriage movement for decades to come. Registered partnerships, as they were then known, gave same-sex couples almost all the same rights as heterosexual ones, with the exception of adopting or sharing joint custody of a child.
The Danish bill was passed by an overwhelming majority of 71-47. The opposition came mainly from the small Christian People's Party which called the legislation unnatural, unethical and dramatically at odds with the laws of other countries.
A mere three years later, Norway followed with a similar registered partnership bill, as would Sweden in 1994 and Iceland and Greenland in 1996.
The Netherlands was the first country to grant full same-sex marriages in 2000.

BALI

WE ACCEPT YOUR MONEY, NOT YOUR LIFESTYLE

Balinese tourism officials have urged tourists to continue their Indonesian travel plans after global outrage at proposed sex laws. The draconian and ill-conceived new laws would, among many other things, ban consensual sex outside of marriage in Indonesia, and as a result criminalise all homosexual sex. After global outrage, President Joko Widodo, quickly backed down, saying the proposed laws would be delayed for further review. Bali is the only Hindu province in Indonesia, where Islam is the state religion. The Bali Hotels Association is urging tourists to "stay calm and continue their activities as usual" after outcry among mainly Australian travellers. "Based on various feedback, the President of the Republic of Indonesia and the Indonesian Parliament have agreed to indefinitely postpone the bill with those new regulations," the association said in a statement. The Bali Hotels Association stressed the unwed sex law "is still a recommendation", adding, [The law] has not yet formally been issued and cannot be enforced."

Human rights groups have slammed the proposed bill, which extensively overhauls Indonesia's criminal code, as "disastrous" for millions of Indonesians.The changes would ban consensual sex between unmarried adults, and it would also make unmarried couples living together illegal. The laws don't mention same-sex conduct, but with no same-sex marriage in Indonesia, gay relationships would be effectively illegal. Homosexuality is not illegal in most of Indonesia. However, over the last few years anti-LGBTIQ rhetoric and violence against LGBTIQ people has risen.

ENTERTAINMENT

FIRTH AND TUCCI TEAR JERKER

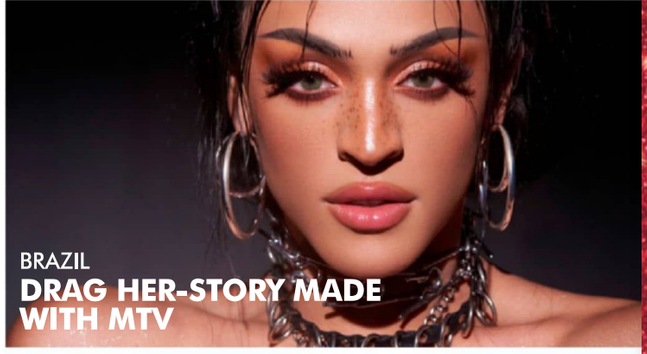
Supernova follows gay couple Sam (played by Colin Firth) and Tusker (played by Tucci) as they journey around England in an RV visiting friends, family and places from their past. The couple's journey is an important one as it comes just two years after Tusker is diagnosed with early onset dementia.

However, their journey becomes even more complicated when old secrets emerge and the strength of their relationship is put to the test by illness.

While both Firth and Tucci are straight in real life, both have played gay characters on the big screen. Firth was nominated for an Oscar for Best Actor for his turn as a depressed gay university professor in *A Single Man*. He also played Harry in the *Mamma Mia* films, who is either gay or bisexual.

Meanwhile, Tucci has played various gay characters in films such as *The Devil Wears Prada* and *Burlesque*.

We. Can't. Wait.



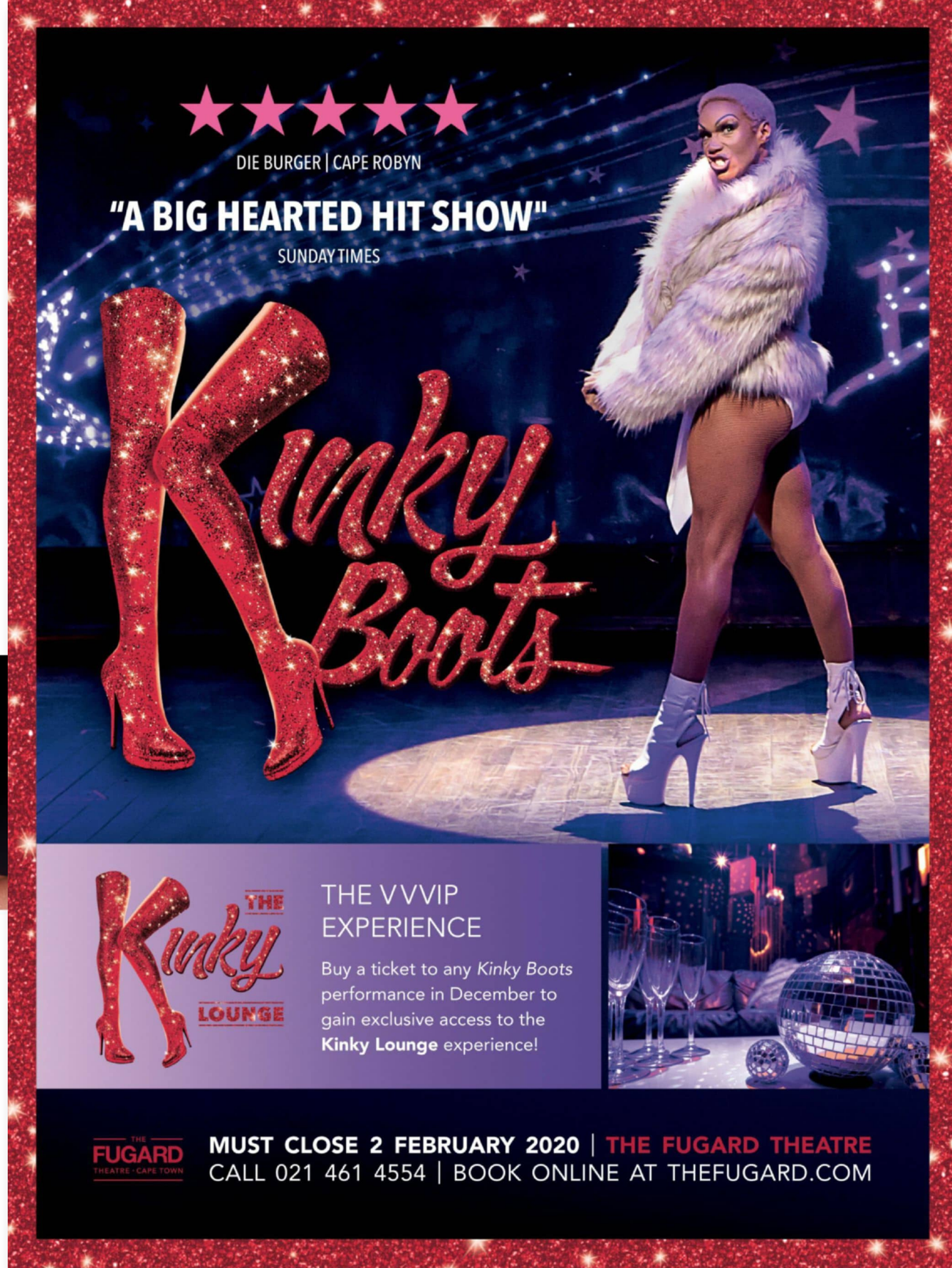
BRAZIL

DRAG HER-STORY MADE WITH MTV

Drag superstar Pabllo Vittar won the Best Brazilian Artist category, but the presence of the Latin pop/electropop singer represented much more than that as the queen became the first Brazilian to perform, and the first drag artist to win an astronaut statue in the almost 25 year existence of the MTV European Music Awards. Brazil's most famous drag queen, a multi-talented performer breaks streaming records and worldwide is the most followed drag queen on Instagram.

She is an advocate for the LGBT+ community in her home country and manages to be in the top of the charts, despite Brazil being recognised as one of the most dangerous countries for LGBT+ people in the world.

In 2018, she became the first Brazilian artist to present Beauty Secrets by *American Vogue*. In the past two years, she was nominated for 27 awards, including a Latin Grammy and is the first drag queen nominated for a Grammy Award.



FROM THE GROUND UP

Jean-Pierre de la Chaumette flies high and delves deep to share two exciting new décor collections. Both borrow from Mother Earth for inspiration. The first is a rug collection with a bird's eye view. Gonsenhausers Fine Rugs have once again commissioned South African artist Julia Swanepoel Pepler to create an inspired design series. '(re)stitched landscape' is now her third installment, and continues a theme inspired by aerial photography. Pepler's source material for (re)stitched landscape has been collected over many years, ranging from her own aerial photography to satellite imagery, maps and Googled aerial land- and cityscapes. Whilst much of this material is in black and white, Pepler adds a judicious dose of colour, influenced by the positive force it plays in her own life. Rather than being driven by trends, Pepler's colour combinations are motivated by what excites her. For this collection, expect balanced, harmonious tones juxtaposed with some surprising combinations.
These rugs retail from R4 800 per square metre.
www.finerugs.co.za

Whilst our first collection took us to the skies, our second sees our feet firmly planted on terra firma. Pioneers in all things marble and stone, Cannata has launched their inaugural furniture and accessory collection, in collaboration with architecture and design brand Studio AN. Unveiled at Cannata's new Dialogue Room, this collection defies perceptions of how malleable stone and marble can be.
Cannata has turned their more than 100 years of passion, experience and innovation to creating a collection of marble and terrazzo furniture and decorative pieces.

Entitled MORPH, these demonstrate the process of transformation from one form to another. The collection thus reflects the company's own principles of transition and growth. Together, Cannata and Studio AN have created several original pieces – including the Morph Light, Stool, Bench, Mirror and Cabinet – that push boundaries, amplifying the 'personality' of natural stone.
Table lights start from R3 800 whilst the cabinet retails for R42 000.
www.cannatagranite.co.za

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Rigid mount with silk and brocade borders. (120cm x 120cm)
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In order to appeal to Western interiors, scrolls and screen panels, as well as textiles, are remounted with fully reversible archival glue onto solid panels, thereby retaining their original aesthetic.

Japanese-style Paintings
Paintings and screens on silk or gold-leaf can be custom ordered to suit any interior.

Sourcing
With over 20 years' experience, I am able to source specific items from all over Asia for decorators and lovers of Oriental art and decorative crafts.

082 900-3607 | alan@alansamons.com
By appointment | Killarney, Johannesburg

MAGICAL MUSIC

Bluetooth speakers are not new news to us, they have been around for years, but to find one that truly blows my hair back, no pun intended, is worth checking out. The LG PK7 2ch XBOOM offers performance sound that will make you tilt your head at first and then immediately tap your foot to the consuming bass and voice clarity. With the enhanced bass feature it offers you a memorable, vibrating experience with its dual bass speakers either side of the unit. A part from the exceptional sound quality, this is the speaker all your friends will nag you to bring to the party along with its pulsating LED lights which surround the speakers. They flicker and fade to every not you play, creating a fun atmosphere for those Friday night shenanigans. Without a doubt the party will continue for hours with the incredible battery life I experienced whilst testing it out, with daily use of an average of an hour or more, I charged it once every 6 to 8 days. This little magical musical capsule will cost R2499, and is worth every cent and noise complaint I received!
www.lg.co.za

IS IT REAL OR NOT?

When your reality becomes too much, we have an alternate escape. With the advancement of technology, the virtual reality world expands and becomes more and more of a modern day reality. Ever seen *Ready Player One*… the appeal to escape to another dimension and to be anyone you wish is massive, or also dangerous? Although VR has primarily been used for gaming thus far, it has also been used for training, as with VirtualShip, a simulation software used to train U.S. Navy, Army and Coast Guard ship captains. Both VR and AR have enormous potential in training, entertainment, education, marketing, and even rehabilitation after an injury. Either could be used to train doctors to do surgery, offer museumgoers a deeper experience, enhance theme parks, or even enhance marketing. There are major players in the VR market, like Google, Samsung and Oculus, but plenty of start-ups are forming and they will be hiring, and the demand for professionals with VR and AR skills will only increase. We have grown up with misconceptions of fearing technology and the power of Artificial Intelligence, but in the greater scheme of things, this is evolution and the way forward to our electro future. This development in technology with help further develop our abilities as humans and broaden our horizons, if we can see it in our minds, we can hold it in our hands.

READY, STEADY, SWEAT!

Finding a balance in a fitness watch can be a challenge when considering the extreme variety with the advancement of technology. The Fitbit Versa 2 is a balance of everything you need, not too much and not too little. The all-round fitness tracker for the person who doesn't like to complicate things. It has the best of both worlds, a smart watch combined with a fitness tracker, which gives the mixture of function and fashion. With a larger display than its predecessor, a 1,4-inch 300 x 300 OLED display, deeper visual blacks and rounded edges of the screen which makes for a comfortable wear. The Fitbit has a reliable sync connectivity with your mobile device and eliminates any lag, so no interruptions or excessively tapping an unresponsive screen. Link your Fitbit up correctly and you can even access the 'Hey Alexa' functionality, allowing voice control and further syncing to other devices. The Versa 2 has seven exercise tracking modes; running, cycling, swimming, treadmill, weights, interval timer and a generic workout-tracking mode.
We put it through a mixture of running, walking, weights, bodyweight exercises and a few yoga sessions. Ready, steady, Sweat!
Expect to pay R4000 for the little wrist pebble, on the up side, there is a rose-gold option.
www.fitbit.com

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GAY PAGES

MERCEDES-BENZ & PRIDE

"We live diversity!" Daimler participated in 13 Pride parades and events all over the world in 2019, with 1800 employees riding along globally.

I have attended over 50 Pride events since 1989. Some of the international Pride events have been astounding, but what really impressed me with JHB Pride 2019, was the fact that Mercedes-Benz South Africa supported it, while Daimler AG supported thirteen Pride events including South Africa. Having Rivonia Road blocked off in the heart of Sandton on a Saturday added to the carnival experience, and ensured that thousands of festive people rocked up. Later in the day we had the most beautiful cloud formations, a sprinkle of rain and a stunning rainbow in the eastern sky. Alex Bouvidia, the dealer principal of Mercedes-Benz Sandown, participated by having two A-Class Mercedes-Benzes proudly wrapped in rainbow colours and leading the parade with a fleet of Mercedes-Benz cars.

This new flagship Mercedes-Benz dealership in Sandton is the world's first global, fully fledged, MAR2020 dealership where the client's experience is digitalised within every part of the business. Hosts greet you at the entrances, sales executives engage with you in consulting rooms with screens depicting the product that you are interested in. They boast a world-class workshop, an S-Class Exclusive Lounge that you can privately take delivery of your vehicle in, a dedicated handover area and an AMG showcase like no other.

Alex, being part of the LGBTI+ community herself, believes that the concept of diversity encompasses acceptance and respect. Everyone is unique, and more than simple tolerance is required to embrace and celebrate the rich dimension of diversity of each individual. "Diversity" means more than just acknowledging and tolerating differences, diversity is a set of conscious practices that involve understanding and appreciation. It means practicing mutual respect for qualities and experiences, recognising that personal cultural and institutionalised discrimination creates and sustains privileges for some while creating and sustaining disadvantages for others, and most importantly building alliances across differences so that we can work together to eradicate all forms of discrimination. This inspiration was also drawn from her organisation, who is a supporter of both diversity and inclusion. Mercedes-Benz South Africa group of companies (MBSA) stands for inclusivity, tolerance and respect for each other's values which also fully encompass hers.

When Alex found out that Joburg Pride would be taking place in Sandton right outside her dealership, she engaged with the Pride Organisation as well as MBSA to ensure the values above were lived and shared with the LGBTI+ community. This is the first of many and she looks forward to continuing and expanding on this for years to come.

Supporting the slogan "We live diversity!" Daimler participated in 13 Pride parades and events all over the world in 2019. Around 1800 employees rode along on Mercedes-Benz cars, trucks and buses which had been specially designed for the Pride parades. All employees were invited to accompany the parades. At various locations, the tour was supported by Daimler employee networks, which was an incredible feat that has never been done by any other multinational company in the world.

Participation in the Christopher Street Day parade in Germany and the worldwide Pride parades was developed together with company, employee representatives and employee networks. Daimler AG committed itself many years ago to ensure diversity within the workforce. Diversity management has been an important part of the business strategy since 2005. In personnel and all development processes, Daimler places a particular focus on encouraging various dimensions of diversity. In 2014, diversity management at Daimler was awarded the Max Spohr Prize by the Völklinger Kreis Association of Gay Managers. In 2018, the company joined the initiative of the United Nations Global Compact, which campaigns for the rights of LGBTI+ people.

Wilfried Porth, Member of the Board of Management of Daimler AG responsible for Human Resources and Director of Labour Relations & Mercedes-Benz Vans said: "Together with our employees, we want to send a strong message for tolerance, diversity and a culture of appreciation and respect. A culture in which origin, gender, religion, age or sexual orientation don't matter. Diversity is the driving force behind our ideas, our change and our culture of innovation. Diversity increases our potential and our creativity. As a company, it makes us more successful and creates clear competitive advantages."

In personnel and all development processes, Daimler places a particular focus on encouraging dimensions of diversity. Daimler AG is one of the world's most successful automotive suppliers of premium cars and is the world's largest manufacturer of commercial vehicles over six tons.

www.mercedes-benz.co.za

OPEN-TOPPED ROADSTER

The new McLaren Elva supercar costs $1.7 million, and it's an open-topped roadster, meaning it has, literally, zero roof of any kind. You can pay a little extra to get a windshield if you want. (It will be legally required to get one in some US states, McLaren said.)

To help keep the wind out of your face, the Elva's Active Air Management System deploys when the car is driven at faster than suburban street speeds, roughly 25 miles per hour. The system directs air around the cabin to create what it calls a "bubble of calm" for those inside. Air is channelled through the car's nose – or front end – and sent out in a high-velocity sheet, just ahead of the cockpit. This air acts like a windshield, forcing oncoming air around the cockpit. A small carbon fibre wind deflector also rises up at the front of the car, further directing the air around the cabin.

The Elva, powered by an 804-horsepower turbocharged V8 engine mounted just behind the seats, can accelerate from zero to 60 miles per hour in under three seconds. It's part of McLaren's Ultimate Series family of supercars, along with the track-focused Senna and the more road-oriented McLaren Speedtail, a three-seater with a center driver's seat.

www.cars.mclaren.com

By MICHELLE YORK

ENGINEERED TO BE SASSY

The new Nissan Micra is a sporty little turbocharged 1,0-litre petrol engine paired with a 6-speed manual gearbox, producing 84kW of power.

This sassy and sleek car offers everything you need and some things you didn't even know you wanted! The suspension has been dropped to improve stability, sharper steering and tighter handling. The 84kW version of the Micra comes standard with sports suspension, sport exhaust tail pipe, keyless entry, a push start button, rear parking sensors, automatic folding exterior mirrors, Apple Car Play, Android Auto and more.

A unique feature of the new Nissan Micra is the Bose Personal sound system. The Tekna and Tekna Plus models are fitted with an exclusive Bose Personal sound system, complete with headrest speakers. The system includes an amplifier under the driver's seat, wide-range speakers, tweeters in the dashboard and two 6cm UltraNearField speakers in the driver's headrest to completely swathe you in your music. That's pretty damn cool… almost as cool as the new Nissan Carcade App (free to download) with a Visualiser feature that is fun to play with.

Nissan Micra 84kW Turbo Acenta Plus, Tekna and Tekna Plus priced from R305 900.

www.nissan.co.za

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MISCHIEVIOUS MINIS | By MICHELLE YORK

Two brand new Mini John Cooper Works (JCW) have been revealed – the Mini JCW Clubman and the JCW Countryman. The latest JCW models swagger with what is lauded to be the most powerful models ever approved for road use in the brand's 60-year history. The 4-cylinder TwinPower turbo engines combined with a new 8-speed Steptronic sports transmission kicks out an additional 32% of output (now 225Kw) and maximum torque has increased by 28% (now 450Nm). The days of Minis only being available with 2 doors is long gone. Both models have the practicality of a 4-door vehicle with a double-rear access door on the Clubman being rather unique in this segment.

The price tag is not for the faint of heart but there is more than just a new juicy engine. All models come with a new exhaust system all the better to hear the rumble and grow. The Mini ALL4 all-wheel drive system is interconnected with the Dynamic Stability Control and constantly calculates the ideal power distribution ratio between the front and rear wheels ensuring power is channelled to the place it will work best. There's a lot more like JCW sports brakes and LED headlights with Matrix high beam function, 18-inch JCW tyres, and LED rear lights in Union Jack design (JCW Clubman). The list of chassis adaptations, sport brake system, taut chassis, newly developed precision struts, aerodynamics and overall performance characteristics.

If you've driven a Mini Cooper and enjoyed it, driven a Mini Cooper S and loved it – you are going to be completely smitten when you drive a JCW!

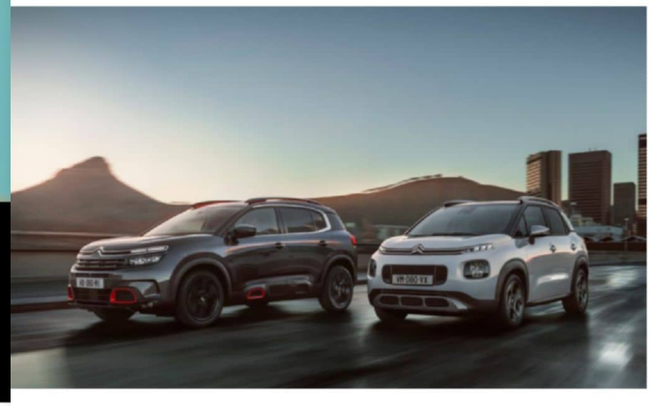
Prices for the new MINI John Cooper Works Clubman and MINI John Cooper Works Countryman start from R642 000 and R708 000, respectively.

www.mini.co.za

THE RETURN OF THE FRENCH

Known for its artistic and unconventional styling, Citroën makes a comeback to South Africa as part of French parent company, Groupe PSA, reclaiming ownership of its brand in our country. With 2019 marking the centenary celebration for Citroën, a timeline worth looking into, we welcomed three improved range offerings, the new C3, C3 Aircross and the now flagship model, the C5 Aircross. All models offer a distinctive style with a unique and fun appeal, while excelling at exuberant freshness. From a versatile hatchback (C3), an assertive compact SUV (C3 Aircross), to a robust SUV (C5 Aircross), Citroën is very proud to introduce the next generation of motoring! We look forward to the next 100 years. All three models excelling in comfort, space saving design, and artistic flair, Citroën now demands your attention more than ever. With many rivals lurking around the brand, the French staple has made firm impressions with the relaunch.

www.citroen.co.za



JAG'S GOLDEN STEERING WHEEL

Jaguar's all-electric Performance SUV has won Germany's most famous car award, the Golden Steering Wheel. The I-PACE triumphed in the Mid-size SUV category, ahead of the Audi Q3 and Seat Tarraco.

Designed and developed in the UK, the I-PACE was created from a clean sheet of paper with the aim of delivering the world's best premium electric vehicle – and a true Jaguar driver's car. Its combination of sports car performance, zero emissions, exceptional refinement, and all-wheel drive SUV usability and practicality make I-PACE the stand-out choice in its segment.

A 90kWh lithium-ion battery enables a range of up to 470km (WLTP) and is capable of charging from 0-80% in around 72 minutes (60kW DC). The two light, compact and efficient Jaguar-designed motors generate a combined output of 294kW and 696Nm of instant torque, delivering 0-100km/h in just 4,8 seconds.

www.jaguar.co.za

Engine	Twin Turbocharged 6-Cylinder Inline 2998 cc
Power	250 kW @ 5000 rpm
Torque	500 Nm @ 1400-4500 rpm
Acceleration	0-100 km/h in 4,3 seconds
Top Speed	250 km/h
Overall Fuel Consumption	7,7 lt/100 km
Load Capacity	290 lt
Turning Circle	11 m
Ground Clearance	114 mm
Weight	1540 kg
Price	R1 072 300
5-Year/90 000 km Service Plan	
CO_2 Emissions	156 g/km

Toyota GR Supra 3,0T

Delightfully divine, the gooseflesh inducing Toyota GR Supra makes you want to sing when you allow its playful nature to harmonise with your boisterous mood. An ultra-responsive 6-cylinder twin-turbo insists on showing off a little butt wiggle at full throttle for the grinning boy racer in you. The zest of this antidote for ageing rubs off in a flash, reminding you how a hunk feels as doting fans drool. Conceived as a sports car in its purest form, the global GR model from Toyota Gazoo Racing builds on the celebrated heritage of Toyota's past Supra generations and original 2000GT sports car.

Driving enthusiasts love the agile and exhilarating blend of rear wheel-driven power and precision that excels due to the short wheelbase, wide track and rock-solid body. Oodles of Toyota's sports car lineage is referenced in the design with a long bonnet, compact body and double-bubble roof. The distinctive look of the fourth generation Supra is captured in both the front and rear styling, especially in the muscular rear wings and the arc of the integrated spoiler.

Superb manoeuvrability and stability are achieved with bigger lightweight aluminum wheels, while the heritage-inspired double-bubble roof reduces drag by reducing the car's frontal area drag, without sacrificing headroom.

Ultra-modern, functional cockpit design focusses the driver and is influenced by the layout found in single-seater race cars with additional switches located on the leather-wrapped steering wheel. Gears can be changed using paddle shifts on the steering wheel, but the eight-speed automatic transmission provides lightning-fast shifts. You can also select Normal or Sport driving modes depending on preference and the conditions. In Sport mode you can have fun tweaking the suspension, steering and transmission characteristics as you wish.

A Launch Control function enables powerful acceleration from standstill with maximum traction, helping the car reach 100 km/h in just 4,3 seconds.

An Adaptive Variable Suspension (AVS) enhances performance with instant response to changes in the road surface, adjusting the shock-absorber force at each wheel for excellent steering response and supple ride comfort.

Electric power steering is rack-assisted and sports-tuned, and automatically adjusts according to vehicle speed, reducing the level of effort needed at lower speeds while weighting up for greater control and stability at higher speeds.

An impressive active safety system includes ABS, Brake Assist, Vehicle Stability Control, Traction Control, and Hill-start Assist Control together with Active Cornering Assist.

The GR Supra model line-up consists of two models, the GR Supra Track and GR Supra. The Track model is aimed at enthusiasts wishing to use their vehicle predominantly for performance-orientated driving and prioritises vehicle dynamics over convenience specification. Both vehicles offer features such as dual-zone automatic air conditioning, smart entry with push-button start, leather-trimmed steering wheel with switches and a digital instrument cluster as standard.

The Full Monty list of standard features include just about anything you could want and an impressive 10-speaker audio system adds the final cherry on top. Feature for feature and performance versus performance, the Supra stands tall. Unadulterated fun can be had by all, perfect balance and poise is the final ingredient in the exhilarating performance that few sports cars could challenge at the price. It is definitely perfect for all the Peter Pans out there.

Engine	Turbocharged 3-Cylinder Inline 1199 cc
Power	81 kW @ 5500 rpm
Torque	118 Nm @ 2750 rpm
Acceleration	0-100 km/h in 10,1 seconds
Top Speed	165 km/h
Overall Fuel Consumption	5,9 lt/100 km
Load Capacity	410-1281 lt
Turning Circle	10,8 m
Ground Clearance	114 mm
Weight	1179 kg
Price	R359 000
5-Year/90 000 km Service Plan	
CO_2 Emissions	116 g/km

Citroën C3 Aircross 1,2 PureTech

Funky and fun with a compliant suspension is oh ever so Citroën and the butch little C3 Aircross instantly crawled under my skin with its rebellious attitude.

Futuristic body styling suits it's bubbly personality and brings some spice to rivals. Compact dimensions bely its capability to accommodate 2,0m tall drivers with ease. A large 1,9m male fits comfortably in the rear, which wins the size contest of compact SUVs. A direct competitor like the popular 1,0-litre VW T-Cross we tested simultaneously emphasised the Citroën's dominance in terms of head and shoulder space, regardless of the high set driving position. Nimble and manoeuvrable, the lively 1,2 PureTech 81kW engine is hard to resist.

Broad and comfortable seats, class-leading spaciousness, a sliding bench in two independent parts, ingenious storage spaces and protective skid plates presents a hot number seeking adventure.

High-set architecture ensures the most spacious interior in its class with the best ceiling height with plenty leg room due to a wheelbase of 2,60m. The largest boot in the class has a large-opening tailgate, low loading sill and a dual-height mobile boot floor.

Technologically advanced, a range of intuitive technologies offer peace of mind and safety at the wheel, like Keyless entry and start and a Lane departure Warning System to resist drowsiness behind the wheel.

Non-stop connectivity and infotainment use a 7-inch touchscreen, from where everything, from the air conditioning to the satnav is controlled. You stay connected via the Mirror Screen function, so safely savour the multimedia content and apps of your smartphone by replicating and controlling them via the 7-inch touchscreen.

This adorable little car with a big heart also offers more comprehensive aftersales features than any direct rival.

Engine	Turbocharged 4-Cylinder Inline 1332 cc
Power	120 kW @ 5500 rpm
Torque	250 Nm @ 1620-4000 rpm
Acceleration	0-100 km/h in 8,1 seconds
Top Speed	230 km/h
Overall Fuel Consumption	6,8 lt/100 km
Load Capacity	420 lt
Turning Circle	11 m
Ground Clearance	116 mm
Weight	1365 kg
Price	R533 906
5-Year/100 000 km Maintenance Plan	
CO_2 Emissions	124 g/km

Mercedes-Benz A-Class Sedan A200

A spectacular A-Class hatchback took the jury by surprise when it beat all the other cars to the bride's bouquet by winning Car Of The Year in South Africa in 2019. The A-Class Sedan makes a worthy twin to its dynamic hatch sibling with short overhangs, whilst staying at the top regarding rear headroom space. State-of-the-art driving assistance systems is inherited from the flagship S-Class range and the latest MBUX – Mercedes-Benz User Experience multimedia system, indulges new owners with a new era for Mercedes me connectivity. Having the lowest aerodynamic drag of all production vehicles in the world with a Cd value of 0,22 and a frontal area of 2,19m², means the A-Class is leading the alpha pack. Not Romeo, Juliet.

Since 1997, more than six million compact car models have been delivered worldwide. The seventh model in this range offers superior shoulder, elbow and headroom with easy rear access and a wide opening boot.

Tradition and modernity are blended in future car design where edges and creases in the sheet metal are reduced to welcome back those lovely curves that we all so adored in the collectable classics!

Spaciousness is emphasised by the horizontal flow of the dashboard, while the media display floats freely above, and the ambient lighting enhances this effect. Technology can be accessed via Touchpad, Touchscreen, Touch Control buttons on the steering wheel or through Voice Control with the keyword "Hey Mercedes". Artificial intelligence learns about your driving habits and preferences which ensures a growing bond between you and your chariot.

Cutting edge driving assistance systems gives the highest level of active safety in this segment with functions inherited from the S-Class. Semi-autonomous driving observes traffic conditions up to 500 metres ahead and uses map and navigation data.

ROAD TESTS | By Shawn Donovan Brett

Engine	Turbocharged 4-Cylinder Inline 1984 cc
Power	147 kW @ 4400 rpm
Torque	320 Nm @ 1500-4400 rpm
Acceleration	0-100 km/h in 6,5 seconds
Top Speed	235 km/h
Overall Fuel Consumption	6,0 lt/100 km
Load Capacity	410-1281 lt
Turning Circle	11 m
Ground Clearance	122 mm
Weight	1275 kg
Price	R488 000
5-Year/90 000 km Service Plan	
CO_2 Emissions	137 g/km

Audi A1 40 TFSI

My week with a lively stumped python, the Audi A1 40 TFSI, will remain a joyous and exciting memory for months to come. It is a smile inducing hooligan thanks to an enthusiastic turbo-charged engine and a new dominant design, you can't help but giggle with every exhaust note burbling out the back.

We received the S line model, in a controversial colour, python yellow. Not everyone's cup of tea, but for the readers of *Gay Pages*, the flamboyant colour was hitting all the right spots. The sporty and poised little hatch, apart from impressive and memorable performance, oozed sex appeal from every angle. The Audi has such a fun element to it, that it felt a lot faster than the acclaimed time of 6,5 seconds. These performance stats share similarities between the VW Polo GTI, which is no surprise as they do share the same platform and engine. The decision between the two German hot hatches depends on your design preference.

Despite the sporty statement from the engine specs, Audi claims a combined fuel consumption of 6,0 litres/100km, which I found a little too ambitious for my lead foot. The symphony of cylinders combined with the S-tronic dual-clutch transmission makes it simply irresistible to drive conservatively. I did however find on open roads and highway cruising that the fuel consumption was highly impressive just under the 6,0-litre mark.

The A1 is lavishly well equipped for music lovers, a 560W Bang & Olufsen sound system with 11 speakers is an option. An easy to operate and well-equipped infotainment system is beautifully integrated into the dashboard which creates a superb upmarket feel, not to mention the ambient lighting and soft touch material spread throughout the cabin.

The Audi A1 has really progressed into a desirable car; it has set my interest firmly in the future offerings from the powerhouse brand.

Engine	Naturally Aspirated 4-Cylinder Inline 1086 cc
Power	51 kW @ 5500 rpm
Torque	99 Nm @ 2800-4500 rpm
Acceleration	0-100 km/h in 14,4 seconds
Top Speed	155 km/h
Overall Fuel Consumption	5,7 lt/100 km
Load Capacity	235 lt
Turning Circle	8,8 m
Ground Clearance	160 mm
Weight	934 kg
Price	R159 900
7-Year/200 000 km Warranty	
CO_2 Emissions	127 g/km

Hyundai Atos 1,1 Motion

A small car staple resurfaces in the South African market, the Hyundai Atos has made a compact hatchback comeback, and well at least its name badge has returned. The Atos will be sold under its bigger brother, the Hyundai i10 Grand. I was quite happy to whisk around in the humble compact hatch, I very quickly adopted the small car syndrome, "get out my way, I am small but fearless". This budget offering from Hyundai is currently manufactured and sold in India wearing a Santaro badge.

I was relieved when I learned that it was a naturally aspirated 4-cylinder engine, I have previously found in competitive turbo charged offerings that the turbo lag is mind numbing. The Atos was always ready to please and gives an enthusiastic thrust from pull off, right up until top gear. I have had some turbo lag moments in small cars whilst crossing a busy intersection which will leave your driver's seat wet.

The Atos has all the essentials for modern motoring; an infotainment system with Bluetooth connectivity, air conditioning, driver and front passenger airbags, and front electric windows. It definitely fits well among its competitors such as the Datsun Go and Renault Kwid, when it comes to affordable motoring.

It is a very solid and well put together ride, and despite the miniaturised outer appearance it has a very spacious cabin on the inside with a well laid out dashboard. The simplicity of the car makes you appreciate its capabilities as a reliable mode of transport, it is easy to manoeuvre in busy cityscape settings, and extremely light on fuel even when driven with a lead foot. Without a doubt this will be budget friendly in most motoring elements, from insurance, to services, and general running costs.

If I had to put my size queen needs aside, as well as my thirst for instant power, I could happily live with the nippy little smiley-faced bug.

Engine	Turbocharged 3-Cylinder Inline 999 cc
Power	85 kW @ 5000 rpm
Torque	200 Nm @ 2000-3500 rpm
Acceleration	0-100 km/h in 10,2 seconds
Top Speed	193 km/h
Overall Fuel Consumption	7,3 lt/100 km
Load Capacity	377-1281 lt
Turning Circle	10,6 m
Ground Clearance	180 mm
Weight	1160 kg
Price	R365 000
5-Year/90 000 km Service Plan	
CO_2 Emissions	116 g/km

Volkswagen T-Cross 1,0 TSI

Driving the much-anticipated T-Cross proved to be more fun than standing and looking at it. I find it to be a very handsome car, but also felt that Volkswagen may have played it safe on the design style – a swollen Polo by the looks of it. My design critique aside, I oddly do have a soft spot for the car, especially in the striking turquoise we received it in. The front-wheel drive small crossover has a very spacious ride inside. Despite the similarities to its slimmer sibling, the Polo, there is a superior feeling with a slight raise in ride height. I did find a few questionable plastics and interior finishes which almost spoil the overall build quality, which is quite pleasant and can be enjoyed on a daily basis. The engine caught me off guard – the 7-speed dual-clutch transmission, coupled with a 1,0-litre 3-cylinder engine has such short gear ratios that I initially mistook it for a diesel engine. You really have to plant your foot down to build up the revs, squeezing performance out of the nimble powertrain. But I constantly needed to remind myself to abandon the power thirsty attitude in fairness to all types of driver's needs. A natural born city cruiser with lots of low-down torque and creature comfort features inside, but avoid any potholes and rough urban terrains as the ride is a bit on the firmer side, especially coupled up with the High-line trim option. The only issue I foresee with the T-Cross is pricing, although the initial base price is attractive, features will push your budget into the R400K region. If you can hold out till the first quarter of 2020, Volkswagen will introduce a modest 70kW version which will come in under R300K.

Engine	Turbodiesel 6-Cylinder Inline 2993 cc
Power	294 kW @ 4400 rpm
Torque	760 Nm @ 2000-3000 rpm
Acceleration	0-100 km/h in 5,4 seconds
Top Speed	250 km/h
Overall Fuel Consumption	9,0 lt/100 km
Load Capacity	326-750-2120 lt
Turning Circle	13 m
Ground Clearance	221 mm
Weight	2535 kg
Price	R1 862 308
5-Year/100 000 km Maintenance Plan	
CO_2 Emissions	192 g/km

BMW X7 M50d

This is one particular expansion to the X range that excites me, the behemoth X7 definitely has a neck cracking presence on the road, one as large as the controversial grille on its façade. I drove the M50d derivative and boy, a diesel has never left such a large grin on my face. Without a doubt the design style is not for everyone, the front being massively bold, whilst the back is often mistaken for the X5.

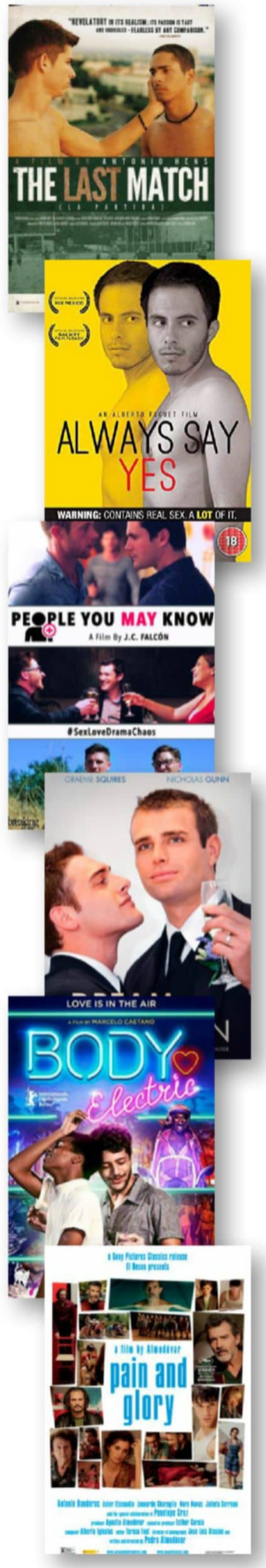
One point I think all petrol heads would agree on is the selection of powertrain which keeps the 22-inch rims rolling at a rapid rate. The quad-turbo, yes 4 turbos, are coupled to a 3,0-litre 6-cylinder magic machine, producing enough power to sustain a small village… or Eskom. The power however is effortless, it isn't a sudden kick to the neck on foot-flawed pull off, but rather a gentle push in the lower back. Once you have built up speed, if it weren't for a heads up display system, it would be hard to gauge your speed as it is unbelievably comfortable when dominating most South African tarred surfaces.

The interior is draped in luxurious soft-touch materials, aluminium finished switches, and open pore wood worth caressing and stroking. The X7 has the very best NVH control (noise, vibration, harshness) I have yet to experience, coupled up with the Bowers and Wilkins, the outer world hustle is immune to the cabin. The 6 configuration seat set up in this test car offered the best of comfort for all passengers, even anyone banished to the 3rd row will find it surprisingly spacious and accommodating.

SUVs have become symbolic for success, and at a price tag of just under R2 million, no one would ever doubt your good fortune and taste when your land yacht docks at a Saturday brunch. The list of standard features does however justify the price tag, you will discover something new every day!

DVD REVIEWS | By Leon van Nierop

All DVDs available from www.amazon.com



THE LAST MATCH / LA PARTIDA
Starring Milton Garcia and Reinier Diaz
Directed by Antonio Hens

This is a striking, vivid and extremely erotic film about a gay relationship unfolding in Cuba against a background of poverty and illegal same sex relationships. Two good-looking heterosexual soccer players fall in love yet have to sell themselves as prostitutes to survive until a loan shark sets out to destroy them. This is a rough, melancholic, brooding film exploring true, forbidden love with actors displaying sizzling, red-hot chemistry. It takes full advantage of the dilapidated beauty of Havana and gives weight to gay issues. (On Apple TV)

ALWAYS SAY YES / SIEMPRE SI
Starring Gerardo Torres Rodriguez and Anty de la Vega
Directed by Alberto Fuguet

This Chilean/Mexican soft-porn version of *Midnight Cowboy* contains warnings of real sex as many scenes are explicit and quite sensual. But it finally boils down to a series of body beautiful vignettes with a flat attempt at telling a mundane story that slows down towards a non-existent climax. It's about a handsome Mexican who poses naked and enjoys many erotic encounters, amongst them an overlong and erotic massage. Be prepared for an abundance of sensual stares and naked bodies that lacks coherence, a satisfying narrative or personality.

PEOPLE YOU MAY KNOW (2016)
Starring Sean Maher and Mark Cirillo
Directed by J.C. Falcon

This one puts some strain on the viewer's endurance. It is a slow-burning love story that fails to properly delve into the themes it tries to address and develop. This one, by the way, should not be confused with a similarly titled film made in 2018. A man who flirts with a mysterious S&M-admirer on the internet gets hooked on their nameless conversations and daring experimental internet-sexual acts that get out of hand (so to speak!). The hero finds himself in an even bigger predicament when he impregnates his ex! Meanwhile a friend meets a stranger and starts his own affair. The film aimlessly attempts to explore themes of loneliness, depression and responsibility. A half-hearted attempt.

THE DREAM CHILDREN
Starring Graeme Squires and Nicholas Gunn
Directed by Robert Chuter

This provocative, sexy exploration of Australia's unsympathetic gay adoption and marriage laws in 2015 has enough eye-candy to decorate a Christmas tree. A striking couple tries to adopt a child and get married, but society's bullying gets in the way. While the film attempts to address discrimination, it starts deviating from its main objective, namely, to explore the relationship between the couple against a hostile backdrop, especially when it introduces a brutal sub-plot where the mother of the adopted boy is viciously raped. Brave and striking to look at, but often indulgent and unfocussed.

BODY ELECTRIC
Starring Kelner Macedo and Lucas Andrade
Directed by Marcelo Caetano

The DVD cover looks pretty promising. A handsome Portuguese man who lives in a factory has many meaningless relationships before starting to realise his dreams, but like too many low-budget LGBTQ-films, the story is thinner than a G-string. There are countless empty scenes of ordinary factory workers aimlessly chattering and discussing nothing, with a few erotic scenes thrown in between. In the end the film is as empty as a fishing trawler returning to shore after a failed fishing expedition. A big disappointment.

PAIN AND GLORY
Starring Antonio Banderas and Penélope Cruz
Directed by Pedro Almodóvar

It is a brooding, captivating, cinematically sweeping confession of a genial director, played by Antonio Banderas. It traces the deep cinematic footsteps of a film director (a thinly disguised Almodóvar), who tries to reconcile with an ex-lover and heroin addicted actor, and the memories this charismatic man carries with him.

By Jacques Botha | MUSIC REVIEWS

MIKA | MY NAME IS MICHAEL HOLBROOK

One of my favourite (gay) vocalists has to be Mika with his multi-octave range. The Lebanese-born singer initially rose to fame with his hit song *Grace Kelly* and has since had massive chart success across his four albums to date. With his new album, Mika continues his witty lyrics nestled in flirtatious pop rhythms. The first single *Ice Cream* has already received positive reviews, but it is really with the second single *Tiny Love* that Mika shows off not just his musicality, but showcases a piece of anthemic pop that is reminiscent of early Queen. Overall though, a great balance of upbeat pop ditties and catchy ballads that will not fail to impress. However, with *Champions* one can already feel the stadiums of fans singing along.

WESTLIFE | SPECTRUM

Nine years after their last studio album and official breakup, Westlife reunites for their 11th studio album to date. Of the original members, only four returns, as Brian McFadden has become a significant solo artist in his own right. Most of the band members have recorded solo albums, but sometimes there is more strength in numbers. The album has already yielded four hit singles featuring collaborations with the likes of James Blunt and Ed Sheeran. The first single *Hello My Love* and has hit the number one spot in many countries. Whereas the sound is definitely familiar, there is a freshness and maturity that have not been there before. The intent though was not to change the Westlife sound, but rather to evolve as a band musically. A great comeback that will fill many hearts and Christmas stockings.

JAMES BLUNT | ONCE UPON A MIND

James Blunt's vocals have always had a way of grabbing one by the heartstrings with its melancholic tone. After the mild public reception of his previous electro album, James returns with a full-on onslaught of upbeat adult pop balanced out with ballads that showcases his unique voice, whilst staying true to his musical roots that made him likeable in the first place. However, it is really in the lyrics where Blunt shines, as these songs are like little glimpses of his own psyche. The first single *Cold* is a ballad that could definitely feature perfectly in a romantic comedy film.

ADAM LAMBERT | VELVET: SIDE A

Since coming second on *American Idols*, Adam has probably been one of the most successful artists to have come out of the competition. His three solo albums have been massive hits and the fact that he has been touring with Queen as lead vocalist is a sure indication of his vocal abilities and over-the-top stage personality. The new album, *Velvet*, will be released in two portions, the first of these being called *Side A*. The Extended Play (EP) consists of six tracks and kicks off with the first single *Superpower*. The track is a massive belter that is a middle finger to everyone who has ever bullied, oppressed or tried to put someone down. The Prince-like *Loverboy* shows off a groovier side of Lambert. All in all, the album serves as a great first half to what is still to come.

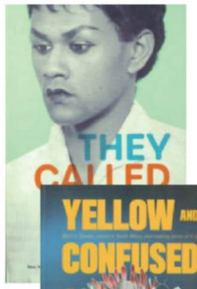
COLDPLAY | EVERYDAY LIFE

Chris Martin and the guys just cannot seem to put a foot wrong. In a bold move, they released their 8th album as a double album, subtitled *Sunrise* and *Sunset*, which is ironical considering the album's title and grey cover art. *Orphans* and *Arabesque* have already been released as lead singles of the 16-track album; both of which has received excellent reviews. The rest of the album does not fail to impress… whereas Chris's vocals are as brave and pronounced as ever, the instrumentation does not distract from the fact that they are indeed a rock band, who evolves and is not scared to venture into different territories. Lyrically the album is nearly like looking at the world through a set of binoculars and seeing the way people live and love.

KIM PETRAS | TURN OFF THE LIGHT

There is nothing wrong with a bit of silly pop. German singer, Kim Petras has had a busy year, not only releasing one new album but two. The second, *Turn Off The Light* is an eerie dance ode to Halloween and all things weird and scary. The album is also a continuation from an EP she released late 2018. If you anticipate thoughtful and deep lyrics, rather go and listen to Tori Amos, but if you are up for a bit of fun, this one will surely fit the bill. With tracks such as *Massacre*, *Death By Sex*, *I Don't Want To Die* and *Boo! Bitch!*, one cannot help but smile and appreciate the way the theme has been carried through. Musically expect dark synths, eerie beats and dramatic organs, thunder and children choirs.

BOOK REVIEWS



THEY CALLED ME QUEER
Kim Windvogel & Kelly-Eve Koopman | Kwela Books | 9780795709173 | R250

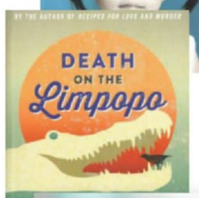
They Called Me Queer is a collection written by Africans who self-identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex and asexual (LGBTQIA+).

Across the continent, and throughout the world, South Africa has become known for its tolerance towards us, the LGBTQIA+ community. However, even if being who we are is legal, we live in a devastatingly segregated and unequal society, where the combination of race, class, gender and sexual identities still heavily impacts every part of our lives. This collection of stories is a testimony to who we are. It is an assertion of our struggles, but also our triumphs, our joys.

YELLOW AND CONFUSED – Born In Taiwan, Raised In South Africa And Making Sense Of It All
Ming-Cheau Lin | Kwela Books | 9780795709203 | R280

Ming-Cheau Lin's family emigrated to South Africa from Tainan, Taiwan when she was just three years old and lived in Bloemfontein with a small East Asian community. Seen as an outsider, she struggled to understand her identity as a minority and immigrant.

She is deemed 'not Asian enough' when she is unable to conform to the rules of first-generation Asian elders, yet too Asian for everyone else. Taiwanese or South African, teenager or rebel, creative or disappointment… she shares her story and journeys to uncover the reasons why yellow people are treated the way they are in a space that doesn't recognise them as part of the population.



DEATH ON THE LIMPOPO
Sally Andrew | Umuzi | 9781415210451 | R260

Tannie Maria might be the Karoo's favourite agony aunt, but she is having trouble telling her beau – the dashing Detective Henk Kannemeyer – that she loves him? Now, a tall, dark stranger zoomed in on her Ducati motorbike: she is Zabanguni Kani, a journalist renowned for her political exposés, who, after receiving threats, must move in with Tannie Maria for safety. A trip to the country's northern borders will plunge Maria and her friends into pools of danger, amid water maidens, murders, and Harley Davidsons. Ladismith's famous crime fighter is back – with a tin of buttermilk rusks in hand – to restore peace from the Klein Karoo to the great Limpopo River.

ZEPHANY. TWO MOTHERS. ONE DAUGHTER
Joanne Jowell | Tafelberg | 9780624086406 | R260

The kidnapping of baby Zephany Nurse from the cot beside her mother's hospital bed made headline news. For 17 years, on her birthday, the Nurse family lit candles and hoped and prayed.

Living not far away from the Nurses, 17-year-old Miché Solomon had just started Matric. She had no idea that a new girl at her school, who bore an uncanny resemblance to her, and a DNA test would shake her world to its foundations. Miché is now 22. This is her story – for the first time in her own words. Told with astonishing maturity, honesty and compassion, it is also a story of what it means to love and be loved, and of claiming your identity.

LOOK AT ME
Nataniël | Human & Rousseau | 9780798179966 | R280

With this singular book Nataniël tells the story of a childhood in three small towns and one large suburb, in an era during which rules were seldom questioned and of a young boy's overwhelming fear of the ordinary. *Look At Me* is Nataniël's first full-length memoir.

THE LONGEST MARCH
Fred Khumalo | Umuzi | 9781415210185 | R230

It's 1899 and when war is declared, the mines are shut down and migrant workers ordered to leave Johannesburg. But how do you get home and out of harm's way when there are no running trains and home is hundreds of kilometres away? You walk. Over perilous terrain Nduku and Philippa and seven thousand others walk to Natal. Disguised as a mineworker's wife, for Philippa is white, she and Nduku talk about their true histories, about their fears and hopes, and with every footfall the possibility of lasting happiness seems within reach. Set during an incredible event in South African history, *The Longest March* is a tale of determination, and a tribute to the perseverance and courage of ordinary men and women when faced with extraordinary circumstances.

FIND ME
André Aciman | Farrar Straus Giroux | 9780571356492 | R250

In *Find Me*, Aciman shows us Elio's father, Samuel, on a trip from Florence to Rome to visit Elio, now a gifted classical pianist. A chance encounter on the train upends Sami's visit and changes his life forever. Elio soon moves to Paris, where he, too, has a consequential affair, while Oliver, a New England college professor with a family, suddenly finds himself contemplating a return trip across the Atlantic.

THE TESTAMENTS
Margaret Atwood | Chatto and Windus | 9781784742324 | R360

In this electrifying sequel to *The Handmaid's Tale*, Margaret Atwood answers the question that has tantalised readers for decades: What happened to Offred? When the van door slammed on Offred's future at the end of *The Handmaid's Tale*, readers had no way of telling what lay ahead. With *The Testaments*, the wait is over. Margaret Atwood's sequel picks up the story 15 years after Offred stepped into the unknown, with the explosive testaments of three female narrators from Gilead.

A WALK AT MIDNIGHT
Alex van Tonder | Pan Macmillan | 9781770106512 | R270

Jane Ronson is the epitome of a dutiful, devoted wife and mother. She has, with grit and grace, supported her husband, Colin, through the scandals and setbacks that have dogged his career as the Governor of New York State. After years in her restrictive role as the governor's wife, Jane achieves her own success as a writer, and is offered a publishing deal for her debut novel. This exciting news is overshadowed by Colin's sudden death under mysterious circumstances that eerily echo events that unfold in Jane's novel, making her the primary person of interest in the investigation.

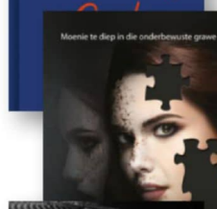
OUTGROWING GOD
Richard Dawkins | Bantam Press | 9781787631212 | R353

Should we believe in God? Do we need God in order to explain the existence of the universe? Do we need God in order to be good? In twelve chapters that address some of the most profound questions human beings confront, Dawkins marshals science, philosophy and comparative religion to interrogate the hypocrisies of all the religious systems and explain to readers of all ages how life emerged without a Creator, how evolution works and how our world came into being.

For anyone hoping to grapple with the meaning of life and what to believe, *Outgrowing God* is a challenging, thrilling and revelatory read.

BLOEDSUIER
Leon van Nierop | Penguin Random House South Africa | 9781485904113 | R230

Toe Maryke 'n kwak wat gehore kamma hipnotiseer probeer ontmasker, skud iets in dié jong hipnoterapeut se onderbewuste los. Het dit te doen met die inbraak tydens haar matriekjaar? Wat is dit wat sy vergeet het? Lukas probeer haar help. Hy is haar steunpilaar en mentor, en die man op wie sy verlief is. Ook hý moet veg om 'n greep op sy verlede te kry. Maar die bedreiging is nie net in Maryke se kop nie: Vreemde briewe en onheilspellende geskenke maak dit duidelik dat iemand haar dophou. Iemand wat enigiets sal doen – miskien selfs sal moor – om seker te maak sy onthou.



ME
Elton John | Macmillan | 9781509853311 | R385

In his first and only official autobiography, music icon Elton John reveals the truth about his extraordinary life, which is also the subject of the film *Rocketman*. The result is *Me* – the joyously funny, honest and moving story of the most enduringly successful singer/songwriter of all time.

In *Me*, Elton also writes powerfully about getting clean and changing his life, about finding love with David Furnish and becoming a father. In a voice that is warm, humble and open, this is Elton on his music and his relationships, his passions and his mistakes. This is a story that will stay with you, by a living legend.

OVER THE TOP
Jonathan Van Ness | Simon & Schuster | 9781471179921 | R305

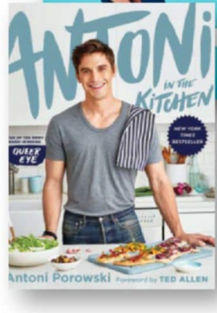
Over the Top uncovers the pain and passion it took to end up becoming the model of self-love and acceptance that Jonathan is today. In this revelatory, raw, and rambunctious memoir, Jonathan shares never-before-told secrets and reveals sides of himself that the public has never seen. JVN fans may think they know the man behind the stiletto heels, the crop tops, and the iconic sayings, but there's much more to him than meets the *Queer Eye*.

You'll laugh, you'll cry, and you'll come away knowing that no matter how broken or lost you may be, you're a Kelly Clarkson song, you're strong, and you've got this.

ANTONI IN THE KITCHEN
Antoni Porowski | Bluebird Press | 9781529010336 | R399

Queer Eye sensation and passionate cook Antoni Porowski is taking the world by storm. With a disarmingly fresh approach to food, Antoni inspires both newbies and knowledgeable cooks to get back into the kitchen.

Antoni's gorgeous debut cookbook brings together his trademark inclusive and accessible attitude to food with one hundred of his all-time favourite recipes. With chapters including Weeknight Healthyish Meals, Apps and Snacks, and Bakes, the book celebrates Antoni's love for fresh, casual and healthy cooking and the occasional indulgent feast.



By CIARAN R. MAIDWELL

RETURN HOME PAIN

A time-travel adventure to a past that, although often misremembered, stirs up very particular and personal feelings in the adventurer

For me, it's a smell. Woody notes of plum, cedar, hazelnut and blonde leather inhaled by chance at a club. Suddenly it's 2011 and I'm sitting inside my car at the Veldskoen drive-in in Randburg. It's the second last operational drive-in in the country. Next year, it will close.

Unfortunately, its final show will be *Men in Black III*. We pull up to the colossal screen – still blank – And tune in to 100 FM. I'm well in to my teens, he's older. Inside the fluorescent snack shop, I buy a Coke and a bar of chocolate and he buys water. Back at the car, he suggests we sit further back in the back seat, "because it's more comfortable". We sit, legs spread wide so that our knees are touching – but only just.

I open the chocolate and offer him a piece – he has the most beautiful smile I've ever seen – but he says no. I'm an idiot, I realise. He has other plans for our mouths. My insides flutter. We'd been speaking on BBM for months before finally agreeing to meet.

I told my dad I'd be watching a film with some girlfriends at Montecasino. He dropped me off and I tore through the cobblestone streets to the other entrance where the boy was waiting, eagerly watching me over his steering wheel.

Now, he puts his hand on my thigh, slowly takes my hand in his. A deep breath, we move slowly, perfectly coordinated. Then, an explosion of unexpected feelings, new sensations – his tongue ring and soft stubble – I catch glimpses of *Puss in Boots the Movie* over his shoulder and it's my first kiss and I never knew a boy's lips could be so soft and – I pause, inhale: plum, cedar, hazelnut and blonde leather.

This is nostalgia: a time-travel adventure to a past that, although often misremembered, stirs up very particular and personal feelings in the adventurer. Merriam-Webster defines nostalgia as a "wistful or excessively sentimental yearning for return to or of some past period or irrecoverable condition". The word itself is a portmanteau from the Greek *nóstos*, meaning 'return home' or 'homecoming', and *álgos*, meaning 'pain'. Coined in 1688 by Swiss medical student Johannes Hofer, it was originally considered to be a literal sickness caused by missing one's home. For a long time, nostalgia was viewed as a disorder of the brain, with symptoms ranging from melancholy and malnutrition to brain fever and hallucinations.

Today, it's seen as a natural, common and even relatable experience. Anything can trigger a nostalgic wave. For you, it might be a piece of music from your favourite childhood film; a place that kinda-sorta looks like a place you used to visit often; an object inscribed with meaning because of how or where you obtained it – anything that instantly takes you back to a time, a place, and, most importantly, a feeling.

Such memorable moments are not exclusively personal, but collective or cultural too. The current wave of nostalgia-focused films, TV shows and products are an example of this. Nostalgia marketing works by exposing us to images and sounds they know will trigger positive memories, and therefore, positive feelings. Television execs and marketing teams have caught on the fact that nostalgia is not merely an act of remembering and longing; it can translate into real-world action like watching *Stranger Things* or buying the re-released PlayStation 1.

On a personal level, studies have shown that nostalgia is more common in uncertain times and times of transition and change. That's because it actually serves a crucial existential function: it brings to mind cherished memories and experiences that assure us that we are valued and have meaningful lives. Research has also shown that indulging in nostalgia can have positive psychological effects including counteracting boredom, loneliness and anxiety. On cold days in cold rooms, people have been able to use nostalgia to literally raise their body temperatures.

But nostalgia is nothing if not paradoxical. In supplying us with substance and texture, it also reminds us of their lack. For those untrained in the art of nostalgia use, this can lead one to compare their idyllic past with their messy present. Inevitably, nostalgia involves some level of self-deception: we are prone to distorting and idealising the past. Consider the old adage, "the past is always well remembered". At its best, nostalgia combines the sadness of loss with the satisfaction that the loss is not complete, nor can ever be. At its worst, it's a brooding retreat to 'better times', ruining the present with the idea of a better past.

So how can you be sure that you're using nostalgia in the right way? How do we differentiate between the nostalgia that invites sadness and the one that gives us power? In her book *The Future of Nostalgia*, Svetlana Boym fleshes out a theory of two types of nostalgia, namely restorative and reflective. Each represents a fundamentally different attitude towards the past. Restorative nostalgia turns an eye towards restoring the past and wanting to recreate it – it's the kind of nostalgia that spurs you to pull out your phone at 2am and call an old boyfriend because you heard your song (don't do it, man!).

Reflective nostalgia accepts the fact that the past is the past, allowing us to derive pleasure from it rather than a restless urge to recreate the moment. It's an acknowledgement of the irretrievability of our autobiographical past. This way of thinking about the past provides an aesthetic distance that allows us to enjoy it in the same way we enjoy a good book or a film. The fact that it cannot happen again is part of the pleasure. Rather than pointlessly longing for a youth that is lost – savour the memory which is perpetually available to you.

Boym posits that nostalgia can be active and passive, and you have the power to choose how you go about using nostalgia. It helps to remember that, in general, nostalgia does not relate only to a memory, but to an emotional state, a feeling. This feeling can be brought into the present, as a kind of power. You can try it right now. Close your eyes and imagine a time when you felt brave and confident. Allow the memory to run all the way through, and see how the feelings, the emotions, swell inside your chest cavity. This short process pulls that previous self into the present. It's one of the most practical uses of your memory.

I can't remember what the second film was, but I remember the fragrance of plum, cedar, hazelnut and blond leather. Officially, it's called One Million by Paco Rabanne, and I've used it ever since. Not because I want to kiss that boy every day, but because I was brave and excited and fun and the smell brings that back for me.

The difference between 'good' and 'bad' nostalgia has less to do with the actual content of our remembered autobiographical past, rather than with our expectations about what those memories can do for us. It is not the past itself, rather it is our attitude towards the past that makes the difference. Less *nóstos*, more *álgos*.

By PHIL JOFFE

CHICKEN OR BEEF?

A perennial question repeatedly asked is which is better: cardio or strength exercising?

A perennial question repeatedly asked is which is better: cardio or strength exercising? The general recommendations from the health authorities are that one should engage in at least 150 minutes a week of cardiovascular exercise, with an additional two workouts focusing on muscle resistance work.

For years, much emphasis has been directed at cardio training, as the health benefits are multiple. There is a plethora of research that has shown that regular cardio exercise can help reduce risks of heart diseases, strokes, obesity, type 2 diabetes, and even some cancers. It lowers blood pressure, and can raise the good HDL cholesterol levels in the blood; it helps with weight control, relieves stress and can help combat depression. A stronger heart and circulatory system should be a goal for all exercisers.

However, while one continues to commit to the choices available of regular cardiovascular activities, as one matures and ages, the need for routine strength training becomes more important. Muscle training (activity in which the bones, muscles and joints are placed under positive stress, forcing them to progressively overcome resistance, so that strength and flexibility are increased) has been shown to lower LDL cholesterol levels while raising the HDL score. Resistance exercise also helps adjust and control body weight because muscles are the tissues best adapted to consume kilojoules; muscle tissue is active tissue. The more of this form of tissue you develop, the more energy you consume, the more stored fat is recruited to provide this energy.

Studies show that there can be up to a 36% increase in kilojoule after-burn as a direct result of strength training, the muscles continuing to burn energy well after the activity has ceased. Muscle training also stimulates the building of bone, especially in the spine, lowering risks of osteoporosis. Bone mass loss, associated with the aging process, is arrested, and balance improves. In fact, the physiological changes associated with aging are slowed, and with regular resistance exercise muscles can keep functioning powerfully well into the autumnal years.

Well-toned muscles give all ages, especially the mature, increased functional independence to cope with the everyday tasks of carrying, lifting, reaching, pushing, raising, bending, stepping, turning and climbing. With this autonomy there comes a heightened sense of pride and accomplishment as all muscles for all ages respond to the resistance challenges of exercise by becoming stronger and better toned.

Ageing is inevitable for all. One can lose as much as 3-5% muscle mass per decade, after 30. This muscle decline increases the body's weakness, producing degeneration of the quality of body movements and increasingly poor balance and coordination, with the resultant risks of falls, fractures and broken bones.

A stronger body is less prone to injury. Stronger muscles, tendons and ligaments allow one to tolerate not just greater physical, but psychological stress. Our muscles help absorb the shocks of daily activities, thereby protecting the rest of the body. Stop stimulating the muscles and they atrophy, waste away, becoming flaccid and weaker. You can't ignore the use-it or lose-it command!

My most satisfying metaphor is to think of converting your body from a VW thumper into a high-performance Porsche. With a smaller muscle-engine, you have less power and burn less fuel. Great, if you are on a fuel-saving motor rally, but with the super-charged engine that greater muscle mass engineers, you are less likely to save fuel and energy, but burn greater amounts of kilojoule-energy as your motor is so much more demanding of fuel/energy. The notion that only cardio exercise will burn fat is a myth. The more functional your muscle mass, achieved through resistance exercise, the more proficiently the body will burn its fat-fuel, as the larger metabolism-motor demands greater fuel consumption.

By adding more muscle-training elements to your daily routines, combining them with cardio activities as simple as walking more, taking the stairs and not lifts, the combination of both forms of activities will help you achieve greater levels of functional fitness and combat the monotony of many training routines, where some simply only jog, run or ride daily. Place more emphasis on the muscle-strengthening aspects of physical conditioning and you are guaranteed a longer-lasting, more functional body; terms and conditions don't apply!

By LEON VAN NIEROP

25 YEARS OF QUEER MOVIE MAGIC

To fit in the top 25 gay-themed films during this magazine's illustrious 25-year past, is like trying to fit Russell Tovey's ears onto the back of a postage stamp

During 1994 filmmakers were still searching for the key to free LGBTQ-films from the closet between police raids and homophobic bullying. *Philadelphia* had just given mainstream Hollywood a wake-up call at the Oscars in 1994, when *The Adventures of Pricilla, Queen of the Desert* by Stephan Elliot flamboyantly dumped three gay queens onto a bus through Australia and busted the balls of a homophobic, Kangaroo-loving community.

1994 also saw Cuba's first gay film, which I ironically saw in a cinema in Havana called *Strawberry and Chocolate*, made by Tomás Huriérez and Vladimir Crus, after which the Cuban audience gave a rousing applause. The Communist closet door was creaking wide open with some chocolate sauce pouring out.

1995 was a quiet year with only a documentary *Celluloid Closet* delving into the archives, while Gregg Araki's explosive *The Doom Generation* rustled some feathers.

But during 1996 came a classic ground-breaking film, supported by South African money *nogal*! Hettie MacDonald's striking and understated *Beautiful Thing* where two British schoolboys gave in to their nocturnal desires.

1997's *Bent* by Sean Matthias, starring South African Brian Webber opposite Clive Owen had a special showing in South Africa, while *Love! Valour! Compassion!* illuminated some gay stars in heaven alongside the biography of the tragic life story of novelist Oscar Wilde, *Wilde by Brian Gilbert*.

1998 proceeded to open the floodgates with some bodily fluids spilling over Tommy O'Hava's cute *Billy's Hollywood Screen Kiss*, which introduced the world to Sean Hayes, later cast as Jack in *Will & Grace*. Simon Shone's *Get Real* spoke the unglamorous truth about being gay, as did *Anna Kokkinos's Head On* which I saw in New York and caused quite a shock by showing the first hard-on in gay cinema. Alex Dimitriades never quite fitted into his pants afterwards!

1999 was a disappointing year, only succeeding in fitting Matt Damon into some very tight swimming trunks in The *Talented Mr. Ripley* by Anthony Minghella, and Jim Fall's Trick.

The new millennium didn't quite party as flamboyantly in *G-strings* on gay bar counters, with Thomas Bezucha's *Big Eden* being the only true attention grabber. Here a conservative artist returned to Montana to come to terms with his high school sweetheart, an unrequited love – gay movies' favourite theme.

2001 only brought us an unexpected threesome of Alfonso Cuarón's splendid *Y Tu Mama Tambien*, as well as the exuberant stepchild of Priscilla, *Hedwig and the Angry Inch* by John Cameron Mitchell, currently a Broadway play.

A gay man proposing to be straight featured in Todd Haynes' lauded *Far from Heaven* starring Julianne Moore and Dennis Quaid, while Ken Park by Larry Clark (and Edward Lachman) spilt more bodily fluids than a leaking slush puppy.

2003 was weak, starting with an unsuccessful attempt at portraying the love between a black slave prisoner and a Dutch sailor, John Greyson's and Jack Lewis's *Proteus*. *Cowboys and Angels* by David Gleeson also deserves a mention.

Pedro Almodóvar burst onto the scene in 2004 with a fearless film addressing sexual abuse in the church, *Bad Education* with Gael Garcia Bernal bursting out of his swimming trunks. My favourite is a film about a teenager losing his innocence at the hands of his best friend during a camp in *Summer Storm*, directed by Marco Kreuspainter. It contained some of the most innocent yet erotically charged explorations of budding sexuality since *Beautiful Thing*.

2005 was break-out year when Jake Gyllenhaal and Heath Ledger played two gay cowboys who fell in love in the best and bravest study ever of homophobia and suppression, *Brokeback Mountain*, based on Annie Proulx's exquisite short story. I saw it in New York where it received a rousing applause from a mostly straight audience.

In 2006, we as critics had to support our jaws when *Shortbus* was screened and an actor went into contortions to perform a sexual act. This film removed the last taboo from LGBTQ cinema in the hands (!) of John Cameron Mitchell.

In 2007 the visually alluring *Bangkok Love Story* drew attention, but it was Adrian Shergold's *Clapham Junction* that impressed me most. It covered 36 hours in the lives of intercontinental gays in London.

Milk, released in 2008 chronicled the life of San Francisco's first gay mayor, Harvey Milk for which Sean Penn won an Oscar as best actor, while 2009 brought the shocker *David's Birthday* in which a straight man fell in love with his best friend's son which lead to a tragedy. Marco Filiberti directed one of the sexiest movie scenes ever.

2010's harvest was small with only Ferzan Ozpetek's brilliant comedy *Loose Cannons*, but 2011 then opened the sluice gates with *Skoonheid*, *Judas Kiss* by J.T. Tepnapa, *North Sea Texas*, and *Romeos*. But borders were crossed with cinema's first honest and bold exploration of what it means to be gay during a one-night stand, in *Weekend by Andrew Haigh*.

That was followed by another bleak yet striking LGBTQ-outing in 2012, *Keep the Lights On* by Ira Sachs, with Thure Lindhardht and Zachary Booth – an explosive drama about how drug addiction can destroy a relationship. The other highlight was the remarkably sober *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* by Stephen Chbosky.

2013 had a variety of LGBTQ films like *Age 17* and Stephen Soderbergh's *Behind the Candelabra*. Matt Damon emerging from a swimming pool set new standards to the elasticity of underpants! But the highlight was the masterpiece *Free Fall* by Stephen Lacant concerning two homosexual policemen who fell in love in Germany with tragic results.

2014 was the best LGBTQ year yet with masterpieces like *Four Moons*, *The Dutch Jongens* (Boys) by Mischa Kamp, the TV-series *Looking* which introduced us to Jonathan Groff and Russell Tovey's cute ears, as well as the tale of a blind gay youngster in *The Way He Looks*. But a life-changing experience was Adam Császi's *Land of Storms* where a rugged gay man steals a house-owner's scooter with a shocking end.

2015 saw the incredibly sexy and tragic *Holding the Man* about the Aids crisis, and Chile's In the *Gray Scales*.
But then 2016 exploded with *Paris: 05:59 Theo and Hugo* (those first 17 minutes of eroticism!) *Being 17*, *Handsome Devil*, *King Cobra* and 2017's top Oscar-winning film *Moonlight* by Barry Jenkins.
2017 kicked off with the surprising *Cakemaker,* as well as *Beach Rats*, *Tom of Finland* and South Africa's Oscar entry: John Trengove's *The Wound* (Inxeba).

2017 also featured the erotically charged drama about xenophobia, *A Moment in the Reeds* by Mikke Makela, the incomparable Luca Guadagnino masterpiece *Call Me by Your Name*, making peaches erotically charged, and the best LGBTQ-gay film I know, *God's Own Country* by Francis Lee. A stroke of genius.

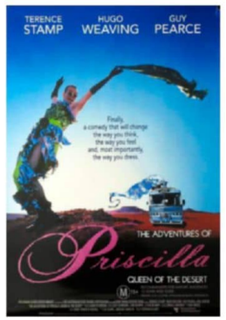
2018 saw *Bohemian Rhapsody*, *Boy Erased*, *Rupert Everetts' memory of Oscar Wilde*, *The Happy Prince*, and the best film ever about a French prostitute, *Sauvage* – the top 2018-gay film, not forgetting *Love, Simon* with a striking Nick Robinson in Greg Berlanti's uncompromising film.

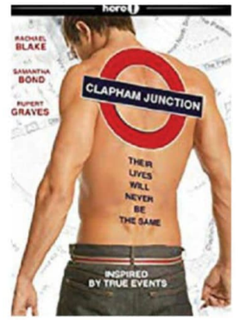
2019 was not that remarkable, with *Papi Chulo* by John Butler, being my favourite, as well as the Elton John biopic *Rocketman*. *Velvet Buzzsaw* by Dan Gilroy starring Jake Gyllenhaal rounded the year off on a high note.

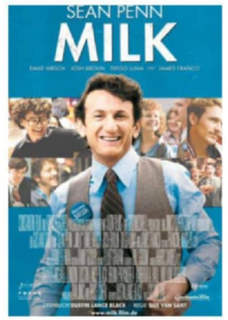
But the best is with us right now. An extraordinary gay movie, perhaps the best of the past 25 years: Pedro Almodóvar's skilful, remarkable potential Oscar contender, *Pain and Glory*. It is a brooding, captivating, cinematically sweeping confession of a genial director, played by Antonio Banderas. It traces the deep cinematic footsteps of a film director (a thinly disguised Almodóvar), who tries to reconcile with an ex-lover and heroin addicted actor, and the memories this charismatic man carries with him.

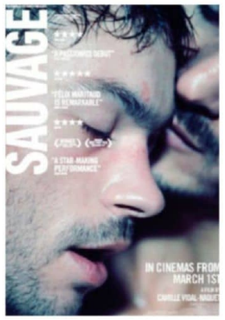
May the next 25 years have many more Almodóvars and a jovial celebration of confirming and celebrating who you really are!

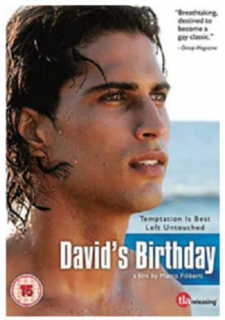
Jongens (Boys)











By ALAN SAMONS

BECOMING A VINTAGE MODEL

Ageing gracefully, now that's an art! Growing older is one of the most challenging aspects of life, especially if you're gay, but it needn't be traumatic

Gay men are obsessed with looks. With youth. With beauty. With six-pack abs and full heads of hair… But what painfully few of us ever think about, is aging and our own, inevitable, mortality. Having recently passed the half-century mark, I often find it difficult to reconcile the person in the mirror with the person in my head. Gravity, the good life and our glorious African sun have all taken their toll over the years. First, imperceptibly, but lately it appears Mother Nature is being a bitch and wreaking havoc on my corporeal form with gay abandon.

Ageing is difficult after a certain age. I've heard all the old clichés. "Life begins at 30" they said. Then it was "life begins at forty". Recently I heard "life begins at fifty". Bollocks. Life begins at birth and ends at death. Nothing in-between is guaranteed. Life is what we make it.

When I look back at my life, I see so many friends who had fallen to Aids, cancer and accidents. I see friends who had felt the only way to end their suffering and loneliness was to end their lives. I also see myself growing as person, making mistakes, but also making good decisions, winning small victories and sampling some of the sweetness life has to offer. Growing older in a culture distracted by youth and frivolity is no mean feat. You can't do it alone. A good support system of friends is crucial. But what is even more important is what is happening in your own head. You can't do it without self-love – you have to take care of your own happiness before trying to make someone else happy. Its analogous to the oxygen masks in planes – put yours on first before assisting someone else.

Sadly, many older gay people live lives of loneliness and isolation. Those who retire to old age homes often have to get back into the closet for fear of being bullied by fellow residents or caregivers. I have first-hand experience of this. My mum worked at a retirement home for eleven years. She now lives in one herself. I have met a few gay men at these homes, and they were all deeply closeted. Sure, it might be a generational thing, but I've seen that there is very little difference between children and old people when it comes to bullying. Seniors can be just as vicious and, in most cases, even more so. Staff can be a problem as well and every so often one hears of incidents of abuse. Abuse of the elderly isn't just physical – it's often verbal, leaving no marks other than on the psyche.

Things might have changed a bit by the time people my age reach their seventies and eighties, but chances are it will still be a struggle. Society is changing, so there is hope for future generations. Many younger gay families have children, but folks my age rarely do. In my opinion, this creates a lag in our life experience. We don't see the passage of time like people with kids do. Adults change far slower over time than growing children do. It's often happened that I bump into a friend or acquaintance from my past and think to myself "gosh, he's gotten so old", all the while failing to think of myself as an older person. Just one look in the mirror is usually enough to jolt me out of my complacency.

Make no mistake, I have never wanted children. That kind of 'normal' has never appealed to me. People my age and older find it increasingly hard to connect with others and to make new friends. Whatever support system we'd once had is usually in tatters. Friends die, they move abroad, they moan too much, or you just grow apart. So, we end up lonely. Perhaps we seniors and tweeniors (not quite middle aged and not quite senior citizens, but somewhere in-between) need to take matters into our own hands and reach out. We feel out of touch at clubs. We skip Pride. In fact, we tend to avoid any situation that might make us feel old. We were once young and beautiful, but now we don't fit in. There are no clubs for older gay men and women, no support groups. We more often than not can't stomach the music and high decibels of nightclubs, so we prefer not to go out. And on the off chance we do go out, we get ignored, as much by the young crowd as by the barmen. It just exacerbates the dilemma older gay people face in their daily lives.

But we still have the same youthful spirit we had when young, only the exterior has changed. All gay men are eternal Peter Pans. Finding an outlet for that youthful exuberance doesn't come easily. You have to work at it. With our hedonistic days (mostly) behind us, a more settled way of being in the world beckons. Reaching out and meeting new people is a huge challenge, especially meeting fellow gay men. So, where do we go? Simply put, I don't know. But if you don't mind meeting lots of straight people (and perhaps a smattering of faerie folk), taking up a hobby is a fantastic solution. If you know what gets your creative juices flowing, go for it, but most people need to play around with various hobbies to find one, or more, that suits them.

Fortune favours the bold, so be bold and try something new. Attend a few cooking classes. Join a photographic group. Take up pottery. Go for art classes. Sign up for a garden design course. These and many other options will go a long way to making you feel part of a community again. Who knows, you might just find your passion and end up making a career switch. Its not unheard-of for late-life hobbies to turn into new careers with good financial outcomes. With the increase in life expectancy, people do tend to move around and try new things career-wise, so now might be the ideal time.

If you don't feel like indulging your creative bent, donate your time. Many organisations need volunteers to help with their day-to-day operations. Children in need, animal shelters, and the homeless are some of the causes that can bring meaning not just to our lives, but those of others. Identify what you feel comfortable with and get involved.

Keep those close to you as close as you can. Pay attention to your friends. Unless you have a very close-knit family, your friends are the only people you can rely on. Cultivate your friendships. Make time and keep in touch, preferably by seeing your friends or talking on the phone. Emailing is easy, but it's no substitute for actual human contact. Set a weekly 'date night' and stick to it. Meet a friend or two for dinner or coffee, or a stroll. Make it a habit.

Growing older is one of the most challenging aspects of life, especially if you're gay, but it needn't be traumatic. As for myself? I made it this far. Who knows what the future holds?

By COSTA CARASTAVRAKIS

MADONNA DIDN'T CALL

"I realised I had arrived back to a new South Africa; one that was perhaps about real change, potential and exciting possibility"

I overheard a sexy tanned Colombian guy in his early twenties say to a muscle daddy he had just approached, "Nice shoes. Wanna got to bed with me?". I was on Ocean Drive, South Beach in Miami Florida, at the local gay watering hole on an April Sunday afternoon in 1995. I had just turned twenty-five and decided to celebrate at a "tea dance" that was held each week at this time. Since moving to Miami a year before it was something everyone did – all you needed to be was gay, have a pair of cut off denim Levis and a smile.

In 1994 South Africa was changing and so was I. We were promised a new constitution with protected rights and social acceptance. I had come out of the closet, but I was sceptical. I was also tired of a boring corporate job and felt like the entire world was happening without me. FOMO wasn't a word back then, but I knew I was aching for more than what I was seeing and doing in Durban, where I was living at the time.

After a summer in Greece, I decided to follow the sun and head to Florida. In 1994 Miami was a city on the brink of resurgence and was all about Stallone, Madonna and South Beach, derelict Art Deco buildings next to remodelled delights, beautiful people, and models and film crews everywhere. I was now one of them! Perhaps I could find fame and fortune, here where I knew I would be accepted; denim shorts and rollerblades on! Men, men and more men. I was a young man and caught the eye of many.

Gianni Versace was very much alive in those days and we all used to hang out on the stretch of beach in front of his house. Tanned to a crisp, wearing my black Speedo, I secretly hoped to catch his eye and be invited back to his mansion, where many legendary stories that did their rounds had their origin.

There was always fun to be had in the form of weekends away in Key West, long days on the beach, rollerblading on Ocean Drive, and hot nights in the nightclubs. South Beach was totally pink with gay clubs, gay restaurants, clothing shops, and galleries supporting only gay artists. How different this was from my everyday 'straight acting' Durban life, I would think. I managed to pay for this all in Miami with a mindless office job I got through a friend. Carefree and lucky is how I thought of my newfound life. Way before social media I would get a fax now and again and hear about the drab life I left behind. Now however, I was celebrating being gay in the gayest possible way.

Standing next to the muscle daddy with the nice shoes that caught the eye of the Colombian, I was reminded that conversations were always about sex. These were the early days of ARVs, but many were still dying of AIDS. They used to call South Beach 'heaven's waiting room'. Many would find out that they were positive, cash in their savings and life policies, and come to live it up here till they died. I met many such men and had sex with some too. Always protected sex, but clearly risky when I was drunk – which was a lot of the time. I watched the Colombian and his 'daddy' disappear and found myself looking at the floor at other men's shoes. Had I just learnt the pickup line of the century? It was definitely easy meeting guys those days, but this was a new level. Perhaps I should try it? I came from a city/country where I always felt inhibited. Now in Miami as a twenty-five-year-old, I was learning new exciting ways to break down my barriers. Shoes! That was the next frontier of charfing someone perhaps? Then a barman friend of mine reminded me of a party at the newly opened club called Amnesia. That night they were going to have the first foam party ever held in Miami. Plastic *plakkies* and my denim shorts on, off we went. Another first, another night of celebration and perhaps another hottie to meet? I had arrived and was having the time of my life – or was I really?

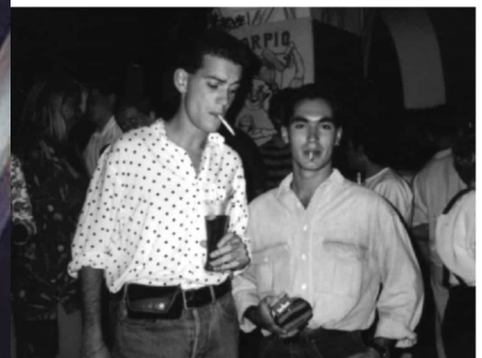
The next week, I woke up and something happened that made me realise it was enough. I opened the local gay magazine which was basically full of social pages with shirtless men around town. It was there that I saw a picture of myself in denim shorts at that party, surrounded by hot men all covered in foam. I looked at this picture and knew I was done. While life had become very pink and exciting for me, I realised I hardly knew the so-called friends I was with. After a year there, I only had a few acquaintances. Some were dying or had already died, others were hustling to get by, and most were looking over my shoulder for the next guy to bed.

I did not feel like I was living a well-rounded life. I was tired of hot and hotter men. There was a fake side to it all; the mindless chatter, dodgy pick-up lines about shoes, cruising and dating were boring – never mind dangerous. Madonna wasn't calling me for lunch. I wasn't hot enough to be included in the troupe that hung around Versace. What the hell was I doing there? I missed my brain. I missed a bit of my soul. I missed home and wanted a career, and to build a life for myself. This was not going to happen so far away from my home, working illegally, with little money and few real friends or connections. I craved reality and I knew I was made for more. My moral compass reset, I booked a flight home.

I got home to a new South Africa where everyone was talking about equal rights for the LGBT community. Powerful constitutional protection sounded fantastic, but what was really happening on the street, I thought? I did feel a strong new feeling one day when I went back to my local CNA book and magazine spot. I used to buy tons of magazines in those days, as it was my window to the big wide world. Before I left for Miami, you could hardly find a gay title, and if you did, they were at the top behind the nude girly mags. (The irony of that always entertained me). But that day I went and found some men's interest magazines and one of them was a new title called the *Gay Pages*. The compelling factor was that it was at eye level, proudly next to a car title.

How brazen I thought the title was? It was explicitly for GAY men, and the cover made it very clear it had something sexy to say. It was no longer hidden on the top shelf, and I realised I had arrived back to a new South Africa; one that was perhaps about real change, potential and exciting possibility. America was the "Land of the Free and Home of the Brave", but perhaps this life was now following me back home? Proudly paying for my new precious gay magazine in full view of everyone I was feeling some of that change and just knew that I was young, full of energy and Johannesburg was where I would make a real life for myself.

Soon, I easily connected with old friends and my first time out we went to a new bar in Braamfontein called Champions. As I walked in with a squad of loved ones, things felt real, comfortable and full of promise. I also found myself looking down. Wow! There were definitely some great shoes in JHB.



By SHAWN DONOVAN BRETT

I FELL IN LOVE WITH THE DEVIL

I fell in love this year, I am just unsure if it was with a person, a devil, or an idea

15971466

By RUBIN VAN NIEKERK AND GABRIEL JANSE VAN RENSBURG

THE FAMILY BUSINESS

My "Coming of Age" story in the Summer edition had an incredibly good response, but almost everybody wanted to know more...

My military conscription placed strain on my relationship with Dolf, which ended after another year. Almost all gay guys who entered national service with a boyfriend discovered how challenging it was, especially in such a viciously homophobic environment. Gay conscripts had an incredibly tough time and maintaining relationships was virtually impossible. So obviously nobody wanted to go to the army, but once there I realised that there was no escape. I embraced this prison in a pragmatic manner. Besides, the idea of lots of young men in uniform had some sex appeal. Denying the more sensual aspects was simply ludicrous. I dwelled on these thoughts and images while rattling along in a train to army basics in Diskobolos with obnoxious corporals. There was something hot about the odd domineering twink corporal with fake attitude. As state property, we were not given any information about our murky future, which often involved injury or death in a place never heard of before. Anyway, there were two ways to play this game and that was being a pawn with no power, or a pawn with some power. I spent over a year in training with some incredibly dishy guys and finally got my stripes in the navy before bailing out to work for a shipping company. This left me with beautiful memories of dishy naval officers. Rocking up as an athletic sub-lieutenant in my white summer uniform for the employment interview definitely helped, and I was hired!

Three years later, after learning the A-Z in HR of the small shipping company, my sister was diagnosed with a brain tumour and we feared the prognosis. She needed help and I needed a challenge, so I joined her company as a financial consultant and once again learned from scratch. Switching from a comfortable corner office in Cape Town's harbour with a safe salary to an unknown salary with no corner office was both scary and incredibly exciting. I was taught the golden sales mantra about how hungry brokers always do well! Starving helped, but it was much tougher than anticipated though.

As a coastal boy who operated in chill mode with a few cool comments on life, it was rather chilling to face the wolf at the door and what felt like unemployment. I was used to being paid just for looking pretty and nodding my head at the right moment, maybe not really, but my new battle-hardened gurus took no prisoners! It was sink or swim. Soon, however my rational logic was impaired because I met Gabriel Janse van Rensburg and fell in love, or lust if you insist. Like any Aries and Gemini match in their twenties, we moved at light speed and tried to change the world overnight. Major home renovations followed and both of us acted like two butch check-shirted lesbians. No bricks were too heavy to carry, and cement mixing needed our personal touch. We fought a lot, laughed a lot and eventually cried a lot. The intensity of the project challenged our youth and our short 18-month relationship. We decided to move on, but underestimated the intensity of the sizzling fire of our friendship and mental connection that refused to die to this day. Once some anger subsided, we yearned for a platonic friendship with longevity and sanity, beyond the complex sanctity of a serial monogamous relationship.

As a coastal dreamer, I finally grasped that making money required networking. However, my network was lazing at Clifton in Cape Town, but offered sympathy and a couch upon my return, after ruining my nails clinging onto a fantasy. This, they told me, is the way the gods work to remind you never to leave Cape Town for the evil smog of Johannesburg. The spiritual message is, was, and always will be, that procrastinating on Third Beach Clifton will always be better than sleeping under a bridge in Braamfontein!

Networking works best with those in the same boat as you... Many young gay people were stuck in the same self-employed quicksand that we were stuck in. I bounced ideas and decided to form the first gay business association in Africa, named The Family Business at the end of 1992. It was still outlawed to be gay, in fact being gay remained outlawed until 1998. The Constitution was signed on 10 December 1996, two years to the day that the *Gay Pages* was born, Saturday 10 December 1994. Some of the anti-gay legislation was still in place until 1998. To this day some of these outdated laws remain in place. Shocking, frankly. Please note, all the gay lawyers out there! Shame on you, South African government.

Africa's first gay business association quickly discovered that only three people were willing to share the work burden for the cabaret shows that we thought would be more fun than boring business meetings. Gabriel Janse van Rensburg, Dimitri Zouves and I made an unusual trio, but shared a common passion for the successful shows that sold out weeks in advance. The tongue-in-cheek named, The Family Business was spearheading a movement that soon evolved into the *Gay Pages*.

Strangely, I had met Henk Botha as a 19-year-old in Johannesburg when he had just published the first versions of *Exit* newspaper under the original name of *Link/Skakel*. He shared this marvellous tidbit with an intrigued audience in the Skyline Bar in Hillbrow. I insisted on seeing this undistributed newsletter, so a few of us went to Henk's flat in Hillbrow to observe the first unopened boxes. An incredible coincidence, as Henk played a role in mentoring The Family Business, that evolved into *The Family Business Directory* which became the *Gay Pages*. Henk remains in contact like most of the surviving key founders from the '90s.

Our first event held at Gosforth Park racecourse was a mafia party and Henny Labuschagne, our host had a dishy stripper there who was a teacher by day! The next events took place in gay friendly Melville, at the Mixer Koffiehuis Theatre, where our Dutch host, Jan van den Berg, with his front of house manager, Badia, had bent over backwards to accommodate our outrageous ensemble. Dimitri Zouves made the outfits and played *seremoniemonster* in drag, while Gabriel took charge of our invitations, floral arrangements and décor. I did the recruitment, marketing and PR, and synchronised the competitive spirit of our stage mad audience! We redefined the concept of *huiskonsert* and our parties were sold out within days when the tickets became available.

Emboldened, we moved our shows to the glamorous VIP room at the Johannesburg Civic Theatre. Overnight the game changed, and I was intimidated by the new level of professionalism where every single item had to be planned, from cordless microphones to piano tuning. The Civic was fanatically anal about micromanagement and every show had to be accounted for minute by minute. Our new caterer, Danie Schwartz, was world-class in every respect and all about microscopic detail. Being an unapologetic perfectionist, he was merciless regarding anything that would impact on serving the different courses by more than 60 seconds!

Our renowned shows and Danie's perfectly served food, unequalled in the theatre business, took us to new heights. Having organised and executed more than 30 events over 27 years, there is little doubt that we had a lot of fun.

Our shows needed to be captured in a newsletter, which soon evolved into a business directory. Neither Gabriel nor I had any idea how to create this, or how difficult it would be, as we knew nothing about computers, writing or publishing. Rocking up with a Checkers bag full of stiffies at the repro house before we printed was insane! Looking back after 25 years of publishing brings a warm gratifying glow.

Gabriel says we were trailblazers, two cowboys armed with a mouse and a keyboard, going where no one else had dared to go in South Africa before and we had no clue what we were doing. When one of us experienced a moment of sanity, and questioned how a magazine was designed or strung together or how you got it printed even if you did manage hypothetically to slap something together digitally the other one was there with quick reassurances that these things were as easy as pie. Oh wait. That never happened. We never doubted our ability to pull this off. I know ignorance is bliss, but it gets you places if you ride that horse hard and never look back on the trail.

Inspiration struck when a friend of mine returned from the US with a gay business directory for San Francisco. The concept was foreign to us and we were instantly inspired by the hefty telephone directory-sized guide. This really was a no brainer, we wanted to create a guide for the South African gay community, but ours would definitely have to be a more glamorous and a glossier version of this *Yellow Pages* hybrid. It had to be fabulous. We almost immediately

Gabriel and Rubin

Dimitri

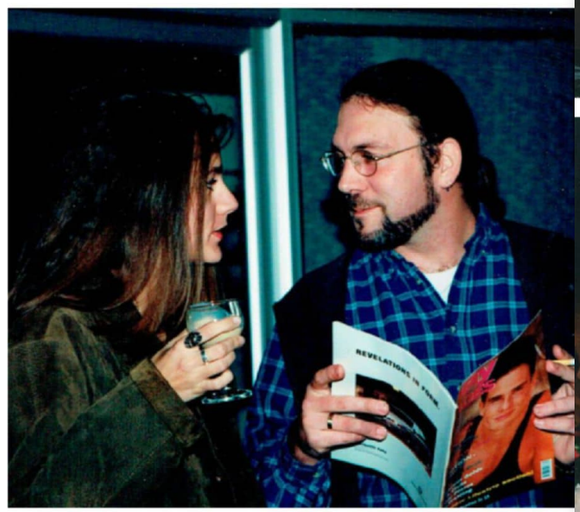
started to refer to it as our 'baby'.

My life revolved intensely around financial planning and Gabriel was the Robin to my Batman. We were full-time slaves in a dull heterosexually dominated world. Gabriel's first priority was to convince me that he was the guy to design this guide. The design software (Corel Draw) that came preloaded on the office PC was the recipe for an instant love affair. Not the best tool for the job, but remember the clueless part from earlier…

Inspiration and an abundance of creative over eager energy was still no consolation for the lack of knowledge and experience. Gabriel had no idea that a font was not only something that held water, that letters and words and paragraphs required thoughtful and careful spacing and sizing, that fonts should be chosen wisely, they were like candy begging to be devoured… that blank space was a thing, so was 300dpi, and CMYK, and stock photographs. Corel Draw was never designed to be layout software, but amyl nitrate was also never intended to be poppers. So, we had a PC with design software, we were absolutely inspired to create this directory, all that was left to do was to convince me that he was the twink for the job. I agreed that Gabriel could design the first advertisement that was sold and if the client loved it the job was his. The client loved it.

These were frontier days and we were shooting from the hip. The office PC was a temperamental little dinosaur performing at a glacial pace that taunted with shutdowns at the most inopportune moments. Software was not designed yet to automatically save your work, and thus your sanity. You had to remember to hit 'save' manually every so often. The beast would crash randomly and invariably vaporised hours of work. I remember Gabriel's newfound colourful vocabulary with glee!

The first edition had a clunker of a title – *The South African Family Business Directory*. It was also a very slim baby that looked more like an overweight neighbourhood pamphlet. We spent hours searching for a cover image that remotely resembled a gay businessman. Our dude was perfect! Our baby was born!



By RUBIN VAN NIEKERK

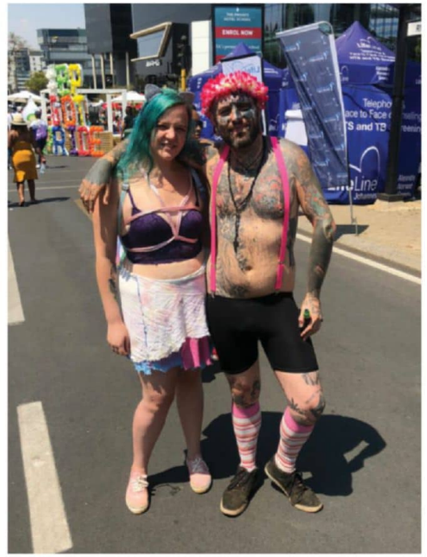
JOBURG PRIDE 2019

I attended my first Pride 30 years ago and love the energy of these events and how it unifies people across the spectrum. Some of the international Pride events have been astounding, but what really impressed me with JHB Pride 2019, was the fact that Mercedes-Benz supported it, while Daimler AG were actively involved with 13 Pride events around the world, including South Africa.

Having Rivonia Road blocked off in the heart of Sandton on a Saturday added to the record turnout carnival experience and ensured that thousands of festive people rocked up. Later in the day we had the most beautiful cloud formations, a sprinkle of rain and a stunning rainbow in the eastern sky.

Alex Boavida, the dealer principal from Mercedes-Benz Sandown participated by having two A-Class Mercedes-Benzes proudly draped in rainbow colours and leading the parade with our shimmering Petrol Poof, Shawn Donovan Brett, who happens to be a Mercedes-Benz owner, with a fleet of Mercedes-Benz cars.

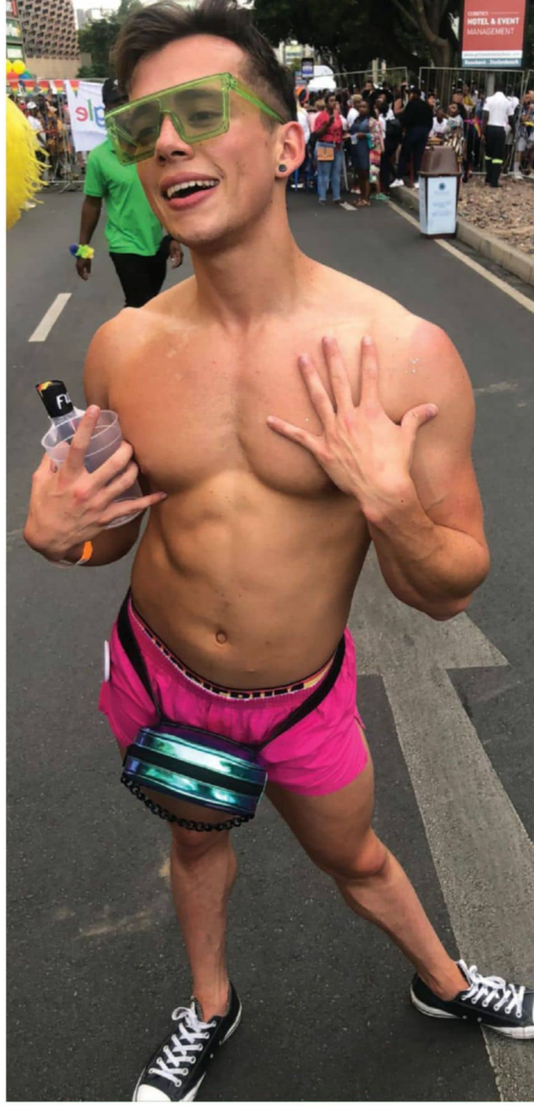
Alex Boavida



#daimlerpride

Daimler Pride Tour
#daimlerpride

GAY
PAGES
AMG



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CULTURE OF
DIVERSITY AND
INCLUSION

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PRIDE
AFRICA

By SHAWN DONOVAN BRETT

FROM SA TO LA

There is a South African stud among the Andrew Christian team, we chat to Lyle Volkwyn about his sexy journey to the top

Born and raised in South Africa, the now 32 year old stud made his first claim to fame acting in *High School Musical: Spotlight South Africa* on M-Net, but what really was the highlight of his career was winning *Popstars South Africa* on Etv in 2010, and being a part of the group *Nne-vida*.

As a young man his aspirations to be an *Andrew Christian* model were always present, admiring the models from afar. Now representing the brand and embracing every day of this exciting lifestyle in Los Angeles, he is making every moment count. Despite making waves in a pool so many desire to be in, Lyle will always have a passion for singing first, and continues to pursue his dream whilst he lives out others.

His interest in modelling was sparked when he won best dressed at his matric dance, which helped him materialise a career in modelling and embrace the glowing spotlight. He joined Joburg-based Ice Models soon after that, where he was introduced to the world of commercials and photo shoots. Like fuel on an open fire, his passion grew rapidly from there on.

Andrew Christian was on the prowl for new faces to represent the brand, Lyle applied via email and within a week was contacted for a test shoot. Afterwards he received a call back, he had a strong suspicion that he was in with the team based on two dead giveaways, he was being paid, and secondly a stylist commented "Wow, you're back, that means you're staying, honey, I've seen guys come in on their first test shoot and never make it back". So the *Andrew Christian* journey began, and he represents South Africa proudly by having been crowned as *Andrew Christian Trophy Boy* of 2019 in October!

One can only imagine the intimidation and nerves a person must feel when meeting the crew and having to shoot with them, especially if they are guys you have admired online, whether from porn, Instagram or from the *Andrew Christian* site. The one question lingering on all our lips; we want the juicy info from shoots, because let's be honest, shooting with drool-worthy boys must cause some tension. "We get up-close and personal", said Lyle. But despite my fanboy fantasies they keep to a very professional work ethic as these are their careers at the end of the day. ,

Lyle's dreams and aspirations continue to grow, they brew within him, and despite not yet knowing the direction his future will take after this, his passion grows along with his positive outlook on life. I was inquisitive to where his future may take him, and he simply said, "I'm not sure where it's going right now, but it's going and it's going to be good!"

I was pleased to learn that the *Andrew Christian* team displays diversity in their models, men with hearts of pure gold and a joy to work with, according to Lyle. Everyone has been extremely welcoming towards the South African man, he has shared countless stories of the beauty our country has to offer, and without fail the team is very eager to pay us a visit on home ground.

Thanks to Lyle, I was able to pick at the brain of the creator himself, Andrew Christian.

What inspired you to create swimwear and underwear for men? My vision was to create a collection that lets men have the freedom to express themselves and feel confident and embrace their sexuality.

Apart from women's wear and sportswear lines, where do you plan to expand to next? I am getting ready to release my new skincare collection early in 2020. I'm super excited about this new project and have been working on developing the skincare for the past year. All of my products are gender neutral and cruelty-free. My first product to launch will be Trophy Boy Muscle Dust which is a gel-based body glitter that not only features fine glitter particles to create an amazing sparkle but also larger glitter particles in fun shapes like stars, moons, and hearts to create a really amazing look.

At what age did you create your first clothing item? I started designing at the young age of 15. I've had an interest in fashion since before I can remember. I actually still have some of my first designs from back in the day.

As every man wants to feel sexy, would you ever consider a plus size model? I actually have used plus-size models in fashion shows and videos. I think it's important to embrace every segment of our community and celebrate our diversity.

Have you ever been to South Africa? If so, what was your experience like? I visited South Africa three years ago. It was an amazing and life-changing experience. South Africa is so diverse from the chic city life of Cape Town to the wild beauty of Kruger National Park.

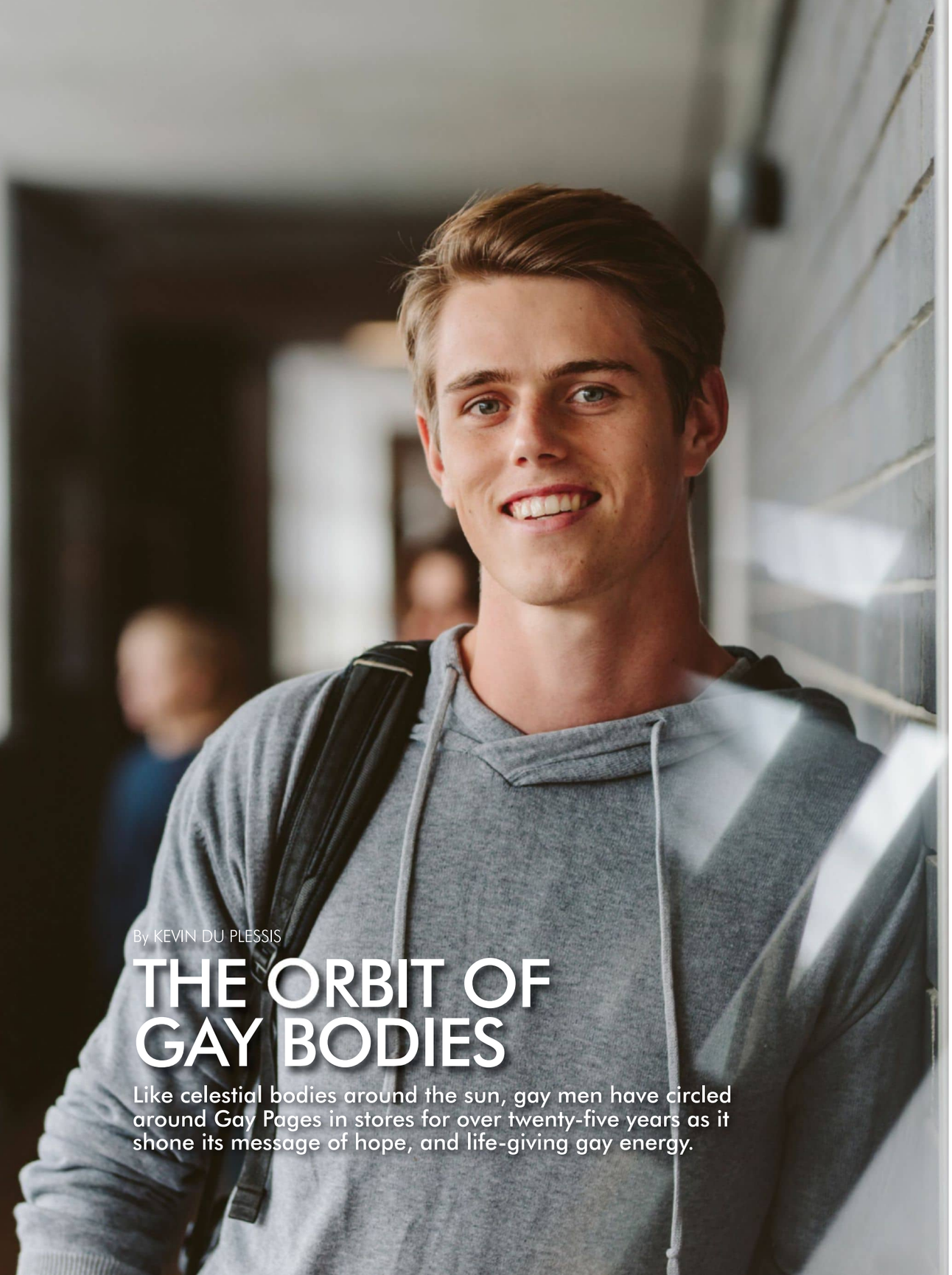
Lyle is beautiful, but are there any other qualities in him that secured him the spot with the world famous brand? It's true Lyle is beautiful, but another important part of being an Andrew Christian model is having a great personality. Lyle is outgoing and very personable, two traits that are the most important in being an Andrew Christian model.

What is one of your most memorable moments in the last 18 years of Andrew Christian? My most memorable moment was creating a calendar for 2019 focusing on gender identity and using trans-male models. I felt it was important to make queerness a central focus of our 2019 calendar because we now have such a hostile political climate that is trying to marginalise the LGBTQ+ community in the USA. I believe strongly in the acceptance of all people regardless of their race, body type, age, sexual preference or the way they gender identify. I wanted to highlight just how diverse the queer community is in a way that felt very natural for me and to make all people in the LGBTQ+ community feel less alone. It is easy right now to feel like an outsider even within the LGBTQ+ community; and I wanted to do my part to highlight how queerness can be such an amazing, flexible word to describe all members of our community.

If you could have pursued any other career, what would you be doing? If I had to choose another career it would have to be working with homeless LGBTQ youth. It's really a big crisis and problem that I think does not get enough attention.

A cheeky question, apart from your own brand, what is your favourite underwear label? My favourite underwear labels are all ones I design and each target different segments of the LGBTQ+ community from FUKR, my more kinky line, to Massive for club-goers to Trophy Boy for guys that are hung. I really enjoy creating and launching new lines. Most underwear from other companies don't really fit me correctly or feel nice on my skin which is why I pay so much attention to achieving the perfect product fit and sourcing the best quality fabrics.

Photography by
Benjamin Veronis
@benweronis
Lyle Anthony Volkwyn
@lyleanthonyofficial
Andrew Christian
@andrewchristianintl



By KEVIN DU PLESSIS

THE ORBIT OF GAY BODIES

Like celestial bodies around the sun, gay men have circled around Gay Pages in stores for over twenty-five years as it shone its message of hope, and life-giving gay energy.

The year was around 2003. Setting, a rather unremarkable mall which, in fact, served as the most developed shopping centre in a radius of about fifty to one hundred kilometres. Its best restaurants included a Spur and a Wimpy. In walks a badly dressed, closeted thirteen-year-old boy trailing behind his parents scratching at his cheap haircut. It was time for the biannual shopping spree.

I was excited because I had an absolute fascination with underwear racks in clothing stores. I would slip away while everyone else were busy fitting clothes or combing through the sales rack, and just stand in front of the wall of tightly packed little plastic windows, carelessly exhibiting soft cottons hugging the juicy bulges of six-packed models selling their perspective brands of tighty whities.

The boys from Jockey and Calvin Klein were my first little secret pastime on mall visits, but that isn't what this article is about. Oh no. It is about one of the most profound discoveries I made as a young and impressionable church-going, prayer-saying (secretly masturbating) little gay boy entering puberty.

See, like many kids my age around then, we were all obsessed with *Harry Potter*, the book that reignited a love for reading amongst the snot-flicking teenagers of the time. Naturally, I had saved all my pennies to buy the newest book which I was planning on using as an escape from my family, as teens do.

Enter CNA. The only store that really sold books, and where I got my entire collection of *Harry Potter*s that still stand proudly on my bookshelf today. Although, they are rather weathered having been read five or six times over, looking for scenes that had both the gorgeous Cedric Diggory and Harry in them. You know, so I could imagine them kissing.

Anyway, CNA was, and still is, a carrier of quite a diverse range of magazines. So, on my way in, walking directly to the puffed-up promotional *Harry Potter* stand, my eyes glazed over some of the magazine covers, hoping to catch a glimpse of a torso or two peacocking on some fitness mag covers. And, of course, I wasn't disappointed. In fact, I was about to be blown away.

Right there next to a *Men's Health*, or whatever magazine it was, stood a *Gay Pages*. The cover displayed a blonde-haired beauty, which I remember specifically because, unbeknownst to my young mind, I had a crush on one of my best friends who had blonde hair as well.

I don't know how many times I walked up and down that isle, every time stealing just a second to look at *Gay Pages* and then quickly darting my attention to something else so that nobody would suspect me of paying attention to this otherworldly presence of a gay magazine. As if anybody would even have even given a flying fart what a prepubescent boy was looking at.

It was a strange feeling. Of course, it did not immediately register that what I saw was shining a spotlight on what lay deep in my own heart. I believe I thought that it was part of some crazy weird fetish group on the outskirts of society and "normality". Something akin to the dirty magazines my brother and I had once stumbled upon in my dad's bedside table, displaying angles that widened my eyes further than the poses some of these women were in! But the most poignant memory of this experience was how drawn to it I felt. I was drawn to that magazine cover with the pull of what I imagine a black hole in the far reaches of space might have.

When I look back, I realise that the shelf space for a gay mag in a nationwide chain like CNA means something, especially amidst the countless publications that depict and cater for strictly cis hetero people.

Little did I know back then that I would one day end up being one of the men on the cover, even posing nude for the inside of the magazine, let alone fulfil my deep aspirations of being a writer by spending three years of my life dedicated to creating content that would have this very same effect on young boys all around the country and perhaps even the world.

During this time, I was delighted to find out just how many people had similar experiences with seeing *Gay Pages* for the first time. After twenty-five years dedicating a lifestyle publication to the wonder that is male to male love and attraction and the cultural implications it has on those of us who are lucky enough to have been blessed to be born this way, it has become a priceless resource of knowledge about gay life and a shining beacon for the rainbow flag.

I wrote an article on Siya Khumalo's book, *You have to be Gay to know God*, and at the book launch I went over to have my copy signed and to introduce myself as a journalist from the magazine. Siya looked at me for a second and told me tell the editor that he said thank you. "Thank you for showing me that there was a place for me out there, however far it may have seemed at the time," he explained as he remembered what simply seeing the magazine on the shelf meant to him when he was a fearful young gay boy who couldn't stop staring at boys' legs riding bikes in the street.

One reader recently wrote the magazine and made a confession. He had, years ago, stolen a copy from a CNA. He felt so bad about this that he wanted to offer to pay for it now, and explained that he so badly wanted to see what was inside but was too afraid of what the cashier might think or say. Rubin graciously replied that he did not need to pay for a thing, and that he hopes more boys like him will keep stealing it in the future.

I sent out a story on Instagram to hear what others' experiences were. One said that his first copy was bought proudly in South Africa, but upon returning to his own country had to hide it under a floorboard in his cupboard. Others explained how they would buy it in combination with more "masculine" magazines like *Car* mag, put the pile down at the counter and just look away when it was *Gay Pages'* turn to be scanned. Others describe shock, disbelief, and even confusion. But they all have something in common: they bloody well went back constantly, drawn by that invisible force that this proud, gay as f*ck magazine was pulsing out into the universe to those young men who were brought up to believe that what they are is somehow wrong. They all orbited the magazine, standing quite innocently on the shelf, looking at it like it was some celestial miracle that they perhaps did not understand, but felt a keen affinity towards. Just like me.

Gay Pages stands for something. It communicates secretly, quietly, with those who have not even realised that they are gay. It is a political statement, it is a message of love, it is something worth fighting for. Because one day, maybe one day, when someone sees their first gay magazine displaying whichever faggery that will be the order of the day, they will not feel shame or fear when picking it up, taking it to the pay point, staring the cashier in the eye, and looking forward to a good ol' gay read when they get home.

Gay Pages' twenty-five years of shelf life can be saluted as a triumph in human rights and the fight for sexual freedom and acceptance. May it be around for many, many more years to be stolen, stared at and gobbled up by ever more new generations of gays.

By RUBIN VAN NIEKERK & ALAN SAMONS

ROMANTIC STEENBERG REMAINS IRRESISTABLE

Forests, vineyards, twisty roads and the enchanting Steenberg dating to 1682, crowning it as the oldest farm in South Africa.

Over the past twenty or so years, we have visited Steenberg a number of times and we both feel this is one of our favourite wine estates. The setting is sublime, the hotel is gorgeous, the restaurants superb and Steenberg's wines are simply fantastic.

Constantia, Bishopscourt and the Tokai forest offers the most beautiful treelined roads in the country which makes it the perfect experience for a road trip. The best part of this trip was the fact that everything is in the heart of civilisation, so you have everything from gourmet cuisine, to world class spas at your fingertips. The natural beauty of this region is rated the most exquisite in the world and what better way to explore it with, than with a legendary car designed for twisty roads. Delightfully divine, the gooseflesh-inducing Toyota GR Supra makes you want to sing along with Pavarotti, when you allow its playful nature to harmonise with your boisterous mood. An ultra-responsive 6-cylinder twin-turbo insists on showing off a little butt wiggle at full throttle for the grinning boy racer in you. The zest of this antidote for ageing rubs off in a flash, reminding you how a hunk feels as doting fans drool. Conceived as a sports car in its purest form, the global GR model from Toyota Gazoo Racing builds on the celebrated heritage of Toyota's past Supra generations and original 2000GT sports car.

As driving enthusiasts, we loved the exhilarating blend of rear wheel power and precision that gets a standing ovation thanks to a short wheelbase, wide track and rock-solid body. Oodles of Toyota's sports car lineage is referenced in the design with a long bonnet, compact body and double-bubble roof that reduces wind resistance.

Ultra-modern, functional cockpit design focusses on the driver and is influenced by the layout found in single-seater race cars with additional switches located on the leather-wrapped steering wheel. Gears can be changed using paddle shifts on the steering wheel, but the eight-speed automatic transmission provides lightning-fast shifts.

We had unadulterated fun with the perfectly poised Supra with its exhilarating performance that released the Peter Pans in us and the spa at Steenberg did their bit to help us feel young and gorgeous.

Steenberg Hotel has just gone through an extensive refurb and the results are staggering. Designing modern interiors to harmonise with historic buildings is no mean feat, but at Steenberg the subtle blending of old and new creates a harmony that is incredibly soulful and soothing to the senses. Shades of grey, duck egg blue and eau de nil carry through the spaces, imparting a sense of lightness and understated elegance. Our room, overlooking the golf course, was a symphony in grey and cream. Luxurious, yet pared down and unfussy. The patio was ideal for late afternoon reading while the soft fragrance of potted roses wafted in the air.

One of the most impressive parts of the renovation is the swimming pool area and pool lounge. Built on a domestic scale, the space is intimate and relaxing. Guests can book manicures and pedicures to be enjoyed poolside, as opposed to at the spa. A variety of treatments are available, and we opted for a soothing massage, which was sublime. With all the eating and drinking, one needs a bit of downtime to just be quiet and a massage can be highly restorative.

Tryn, Steenberg's restaurant pays homage to the original owner, Catharina Ustings Ras, or Tryn as she was affectionately known. The farm dates back to 1682 and is the oldest in Cape Town. By all accounts Tryn was a force of nature – a larger than life character who lived her life as she saw fit and not in any man's shadow. Even her sons were at the receiving end of gossip… they loved going horse riding without wearing shirts, which scandalised locals and led some gossip about them riding 'naked'. Now that would have been a sight!

Tryn is an elegant venue. Contemporary in style, with beautiful art and furnishing. Breakfast on the east-facing patio is a lovely way to start the day. At night, the venue comes into its own with subtly shining metallic surfaces and warm wood. Chef Kerry Kilpin's food relies on freshness and it's a delight to enjoy a beautiful meal where the flavours

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are made the heroes and ingredients are presented with a Zen-like simplicity and not tortured into towers and soils and foams. An utter delight!

But, as much as the hotel is a piece of art, the cellar and tasting room, as well as the adjoining restaurant, 1682, should be on every visitor's to-do list. Steenberg is moving away from red wine and concentrating on what they do best – white wine and MCC. We enjoyed an informative cellar tour before sampling the estate's fine wines. Thank heavens we didn't have to drive, just walk a few metres to the restaurant for a superb lunch. With veganism on the rise (and Alan having adopted the lifestyle), we were impressed with the fact that vegans have a separate menu and are not relegated to an insipid dish or two tacked onto a menu as an afterthought – something that happens far too often, even in better establishments.

The food is divine and the waiting staff are all incredibly friendly and knowledgeable. We caused quite a stir when we arrived for dinner about three hours after a rather substantial lunch! But we do the hard work of eating and drinking to bring you, our dear readers, the full scoop, leaving no dish untouched in the process... Dinner at 1682 is tapas-style, with all the dishes served as small plated offerings. Its relaxed, informal and easy to share. Again, there is a separate menu for vegans. Dinner looked great, but we only managed three small plates between the two of us before throwing in the towel and returning to our room.

But wait! There's more! It just so happened that our weekend visit coincided with Alan's birthday and when we arrived, a plate of delicious chocolate truffles was waiting next to the words 'Happy Birthday' spelled out in rose petals on the bed. Vegan or not, Alan tucked in, chocolate being his one biggest vice.

Steenberg's exceptional wines, heavenly food and gorgeous historic setting amid the rows of vines never fail to impress. The estate weaves a spell that is simply irresistible. Next time you are in Cape Town, do pay the farm a visit to sample their wines, and enjoy a meal. Better yet, spend a night or two and get the full Steenberg treatment. You'll fall in love and return again, guaranteed.

www.steenbergfarm.com
www.toyota.co.za

THE PHOENIX HAS RISEN AGAIN

Despite two devastating fires, Tintswalo Atlantic was rebuilt without any loss of character

We felt such profound sadness when we heard Tintswalo Atlantic had burned again. Being one of our favourite destinations, it was a blow. First, parts of the hotel succumbed to the flames that ravaged Hout Bay a few years ago. Then, more recently, a fire started in the kitchen. Each time, Tintswalo Atlantic was rebuilt without any loss of character.

We were delighted to receive an invitation to visit the new incarnation and we were happy to spend some time enjoying a short stay at Tintswalo Atlantic once again.

Winding our way down below Chapman's Peak Drive in the minivan shuttle, we felt a familiar sense of excitement. Tintswalo Atlantic is among our favourite Cape Town properties and we were excited to see the newest incarnation of this beautiful hotel.

Situated on Parks Board land just above a pebble beach close to the water's edge below Chapman's Peak Drive, this is one of the most stunning positions in all of Cape Town. Overlooking Hout Bay and its famed Sentinel Peak, the view is incomparable. It is an ever-changing vista reminiscent of an Impressionist painting. Blue sky, clouds, fiery sunsets and spectacular full moons will enthral any visitor. We have even been there during a cold, rainy winter storm when the distinction between sky and sea was blurred by rain, fog and roaring waves. It is a view one could never tire of.

When it comes to offering an incomparable guest experience, the Tintswalo group gets it right every time. From the friendly check-in, to the inevitable sad departure, every moment is an experience, whether one is simply chilling at the pool, enjoying a spa treatment, or sampling some of the fine food created in the open kitchen.

As with all the properties in the Tintswalo portfolio, attention to detail is of utmost importance. It can be seen in elements of the décor that provide a humorous touch, such as a beaded gecko in the bathroom, right down to the way food is plated by the chef. No detail is overlooked. This also extends to the interpersonal relations between staff and guests. There is a genuine warmth in the simplest of gestures and greetings.

Each of the ten suites is individually themed and has its own fireplace and deck. The ocean is just a stone's throw away, and with the patio doors open wide, the fragrance of the sea wafting into the room and the sound of waves and seagulls providing the background music, its possibly the most relaxing place you can be anywhere in the Mother City.

The suites are all named after islands – there's Madagascar and Zanzibar, Java and Corsica, Sicily and Robben Island and though the décor is elegant, there are touches that speak of home and of real warmth and gentle humour. The owner, Gay Corbett, added shells to adorn the bathrooms, gluing them around the basins and dado-like above the half-tiled walls. There are other touches, like beaded geckos and bugs, that impart a sense of humour and playfulness into the décor scheme. This lightness of heart and playful spirit is what makes all Tintswalo's properties so special.

This is the ultimate escape from life when you need to go into seclusion, but don't fancy withdrawing from humanity completely. Guests are ensconced in elegant surroundings and all your physical needs are taken care of – from sleeping in comfortable beds covered in fine sheeting, to lazing at the pool with a cocktail, or enjoying a fine meal and good wine. This is the perfect place for honeymooning couples, or travelling alone.

Tintswalo Atlantic strives to bring an exclusive lodge experience to their guests, and walk-in lunch and dinner guests are not encouraged. Over and above overnight guests, the lodge does cater for outside lunch reservations, special occasions and events. Visitors may book for lunch on a Wednesday with a maximum of 10 guests per booking, and due to high demand, booking in advance is essential.

Tintswalo Atlantic is a haven of calm amid the hustle and bustle of Cape Town. If you haven't yet experienced this unique property, put it on your To Do List.

www.tintswalo.com

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www.health4men.co.za.

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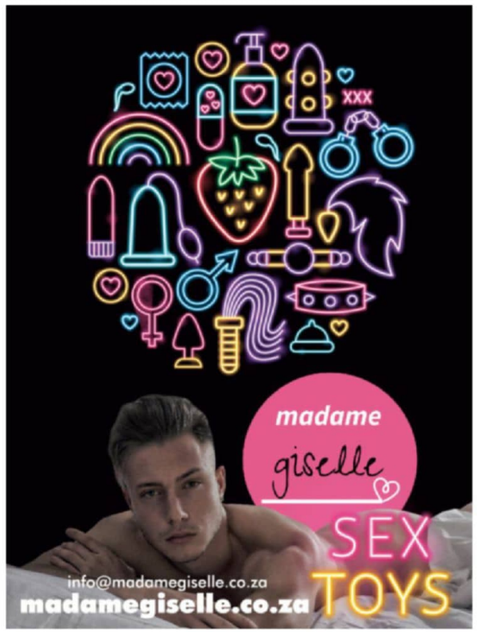

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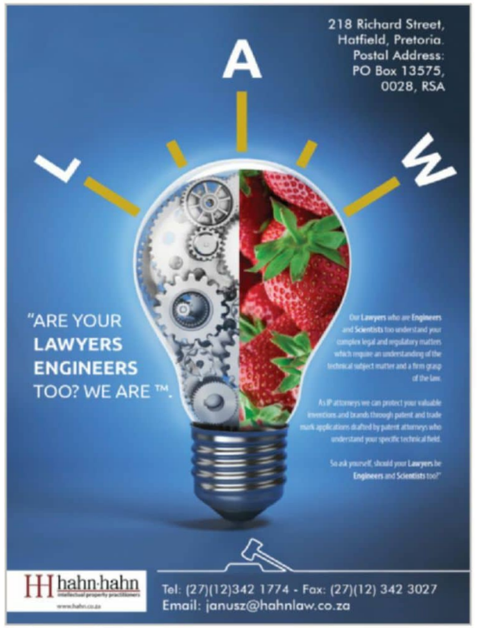

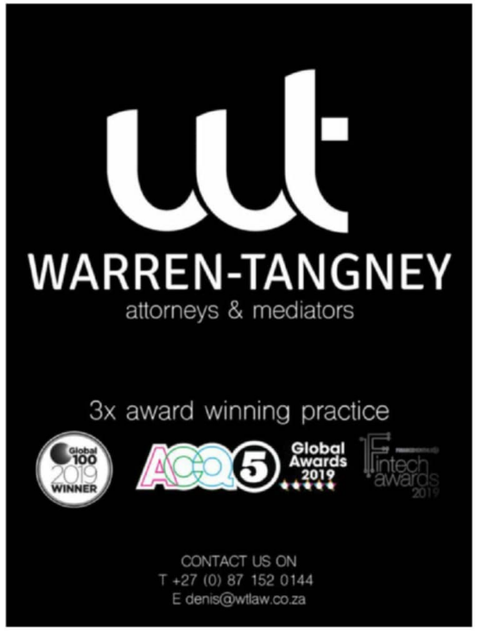

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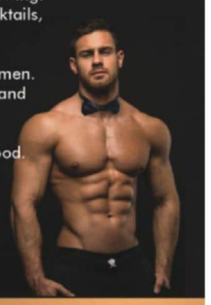

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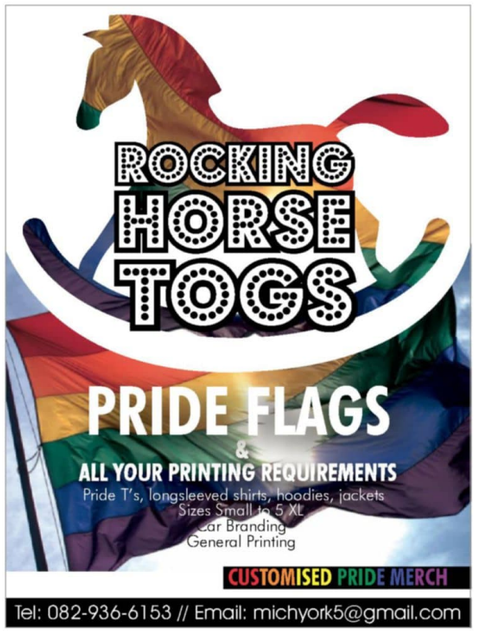

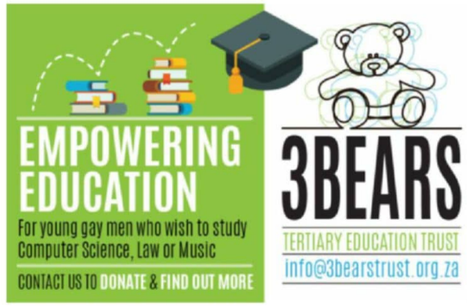

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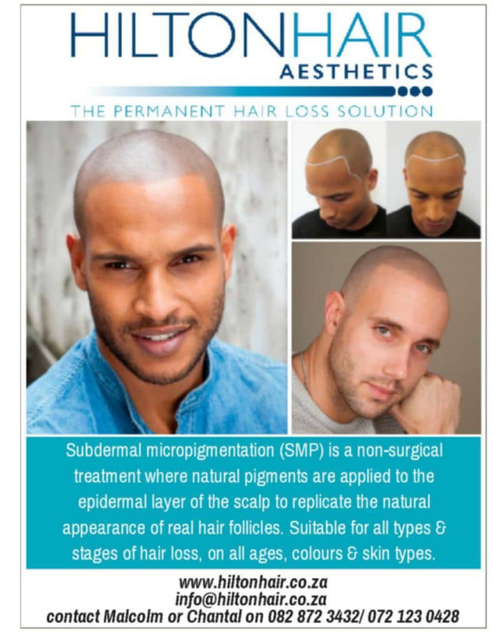
www.marinabeachhouse.capetown



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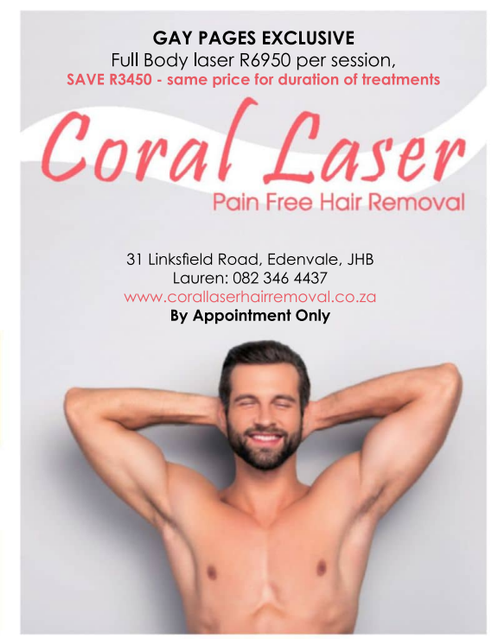
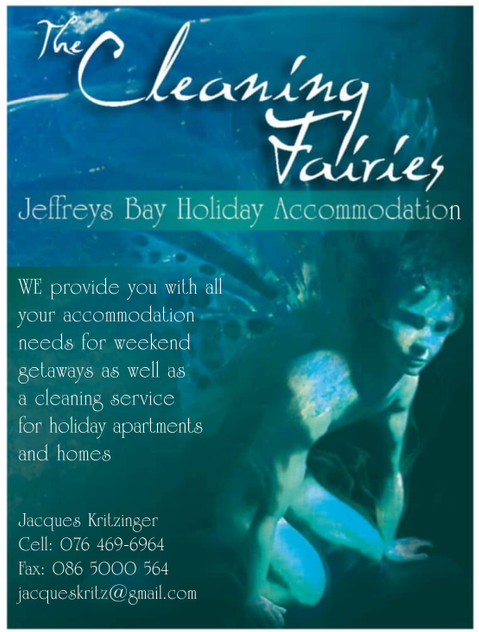
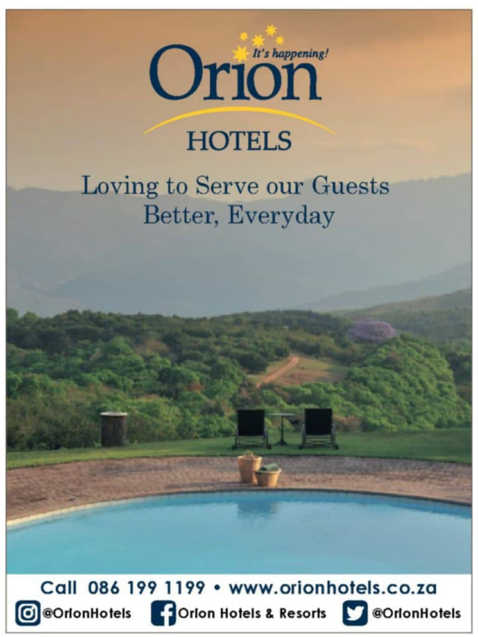


Holiday Accommadation

Holiday Cleaning Service





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www.walkersons.co.za

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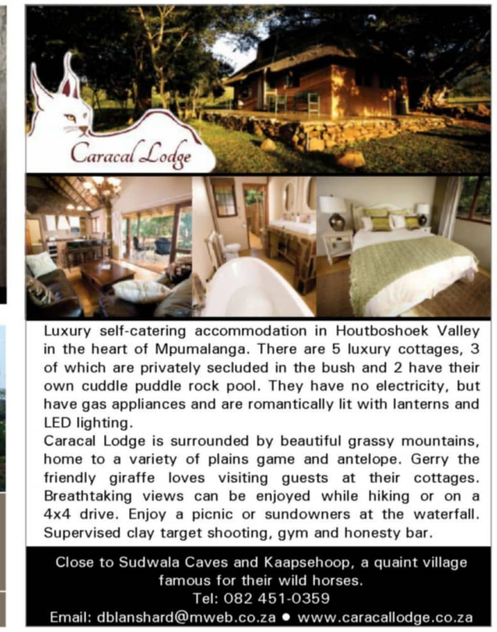

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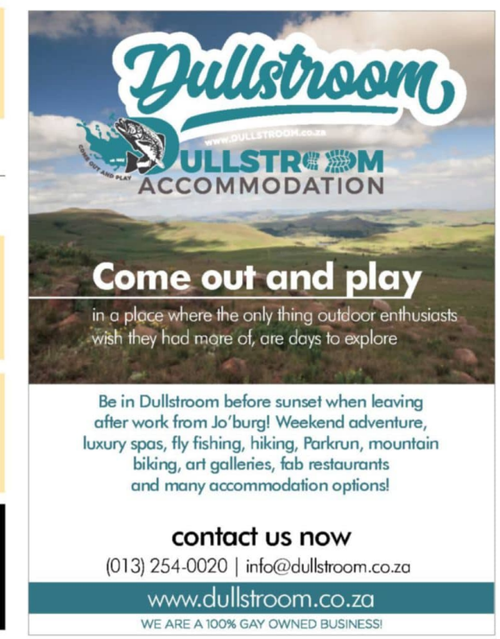

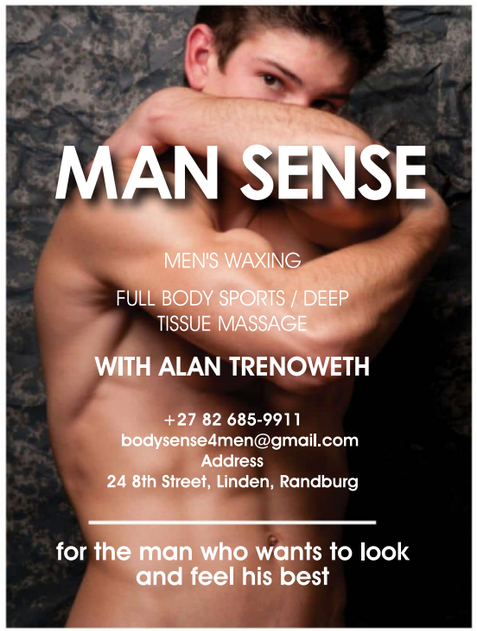

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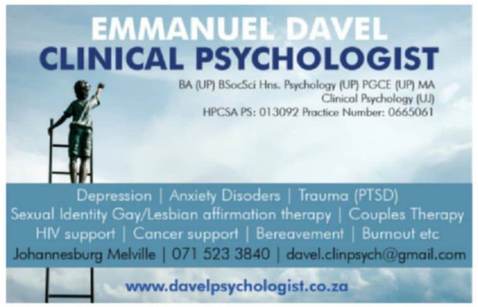

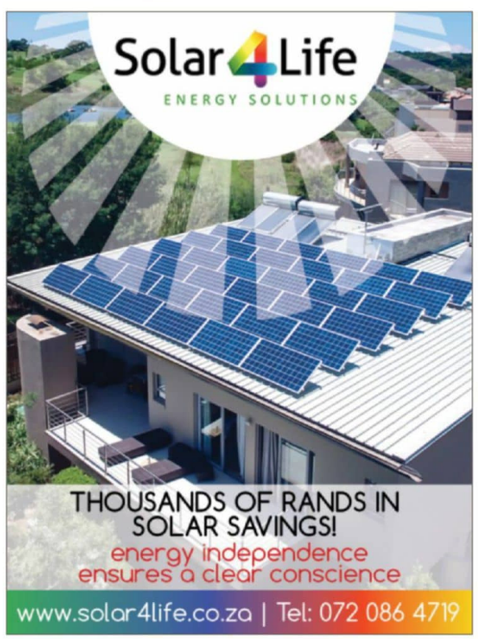

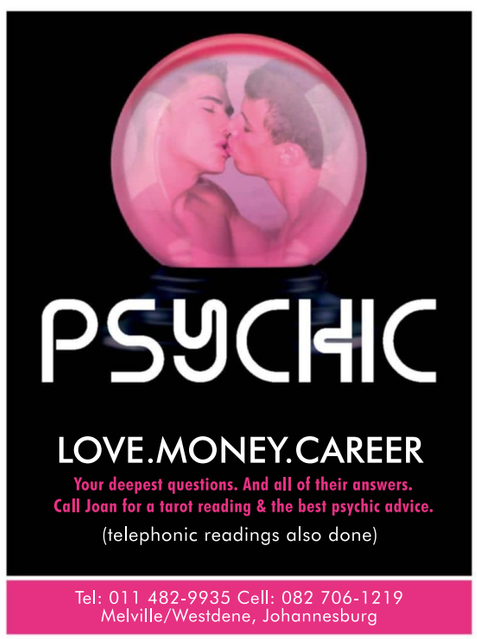

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Amon Ra Travel and Tours (Pty) Ltd is a straight run and pro LGBT travel agency. The travel agency sells LGBT-friendly destinations such as Thailand.
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Email: carl@amonratravel.co.za
Website: www.amonratravel.co.za

RESTAURANTS

TRYN | Steenberg, Cape Town

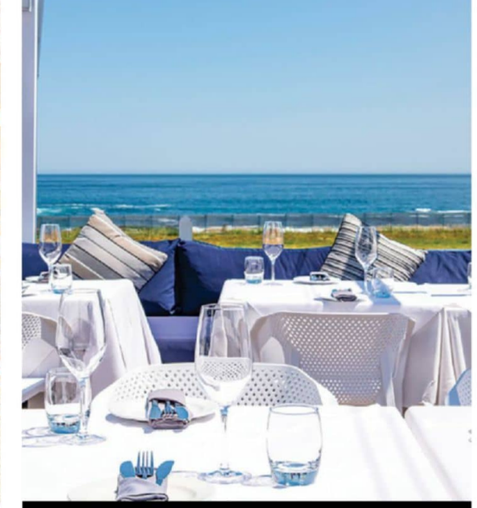
Tryn, Steenberg's new signature restaurant has re-opened with Chef Kerry Kilpin at the helm. After the complete transformation of Catharina's Restaurant which closed after 21 years, Tryn is a refreshed, youthful and stylish space that appeals with leisurely charm and inspiring cuisine.
Dedicated to Steenberg's 17th century founder, Catharina Ras, or Tryn as she was known, the new restaurant is contemporary in spirit with fabulous food, bold accents and modern textures. Chef Kerry takes her culinary skills to the next level, featuring an abundance of fresh ingredients, honest flavours and intuitive service. Known for adding a touch of Asian and Middle Eastern flair to her classically prepared food, Kerry enlivens the familiar with exciting twists and flavour combinations to delight all palates.
True to her personal style, she has infused some unexpected savoury notes such as basil, coriander, thyme and cardamom into her desserts.
Steenberg Estate, Steenberg Road, Tokai, Cape Town.
Open for breakfast from Monday to Sunday 07h00 to 10h30. Lunch from Monday to Sunday 12h00 to 15h00. Dinner from Monday to Sunday 18h00 to 21h30.
Tel: (021) 713-7178
Email: info@tryn.co.za
www.tryn.co.za

FORTI GRILL & BAR | Menlyn Maine, Pretoria

Forti Grill and Bar is the dream of well-known SA celebrity chef Fortunato (Forti) Mazzone. After 22 very successful years at his iconic restaurant, Ritrovo, Forti created a flagship restaurant to a truly international standard. Forti Grill and Bar is an upmarket restaurant with an Italian flair focussed on hospitality and exceptional food. A beautiful and luxuriously appointed dining room and showpiece kitchen offering service and cuisine of a superior standard. The restaurant seats 100 and includes two private rooms and a full temperature-controlled wine cellar/private room and an elegant bar serving some of the most exclusive drinks in SA. An outdoor terrace offers a variety of seating options. The restaurant features olive trees, and some of the most exclusive bespoke furniture, art and chandeliers and lighting ever created for a South African restaurant.
The menu has a wide selection of selected free-range meats including the famous marbled wagyu beef, and fresh fish daily. There is a beautiful pasta bar where pasta is made on order. Clients can watch the kitchen action unfolding through a giant viewing window.
The wine list brings together some of South Africa's greatest wines as well as a fine international selection. There is also a fantastic signature cocktail list.
Italian specialities, wines and Le Creuset cookware are available from the delicatessen.
Forti is a true fusion of exceptional food, great wine, fine art and beautiful music. A true event for the senses.
Top Floor Sun Time Square Casino, c/o Aramist Avenue and Corobay Street, Menlyn Maine, Pretoria.
Open from Sunday to Thursday from 11h45 to 22h00 and Friday to Saturday from 11h45 to 24h00.
Tel: 08600FORTI (36784) or (012) 003-6181
Cell: 083 467-2588 or 076 260-3025
www.forti.co.za

FIREFISH | Waterfront, Cape Town

The perfect spot to dine after a boat cruise on the V&A Waterfront "sunset strip". Hop off your vessel and enter Firefish, a restaurant built on the art of stylish simplicity in terms of décor, welcoming and attentive service, and of course, unique and considered tastes from the cool Atlantic ocean with a variety of other options.
Have a look at their adventurous cocktail menu. Ask your waiter for suggestions, which might lead you to new ways of enjoying well-known drinks. And do not skip over the starters menu, go for the unfussy fish cake or try the carpaccio of beef.
If you love seafood, their prawns stand out as one of the most uniquely seasoned dishes, and combined with their spiced rice you will be in food heaven. From the grill we suggest the sweet and spicy barbecue baby back ribs. Additionally they offer sushi, lamb and chicken dishes, and vegetarians are well catered for. Among the desserts the iced nougat with salted almonds, sour cream and honey jelly stands out.
Shop 154, Victoria Wharf, V&A Waterfront, Cape Town.
Open Monday to Sunday from 12h00 to 10h30.
Tel: (021) 286-4933
Email: info@firefishrestaurant.co.za
www.firefishrestaurant.co.za



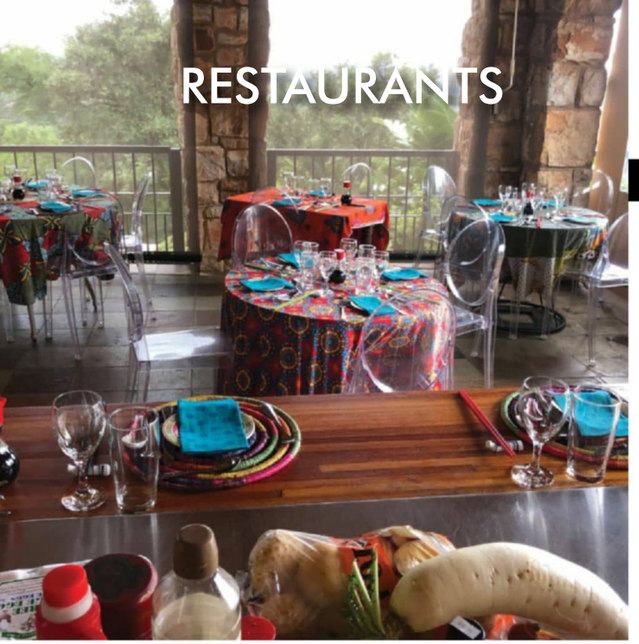
THE BUNGALOW | Clifton, Cape Town

"Take balmy, add a splash of bubbly, stir in a breezy blonde, pop in an oyster and it's the Bungalow." So reads the intro on their website, and it is beautifully accurate. A fantastic spot to chill over summer months lounging about on beds and couches with a magnificent sea view. They also get in DJs and attract a fabulously diverse crowd on sunny days. But their food will have you coming back even when it's cold and windy, when you might prefer a classy interior.
The sushi and appetisers are remarkable. For mains think stacks of veggies, chunks of bread, piles of prawns, juicy meats from the grill, pizza, and buckets of thin-cut fries. There is a wide variety, but if you are doing a chill day lounging about you might want to taste their gourmet chicken, beef, fish or veggie burgers, they do not disappoint! Order cocktails galore from their cocktail bar, these too are adventurous and tasty. Or go for the classy option and order some French champagne and a bucket of oysters. A definite must!
Glen Country Club, 3 Victoria Road, Clifton, Cape Town.
Open Monday to Sunday from 12h00 to 23h00.
Tel: (021) 438-2018
Email: reservations@thebungalow.co.za
www.thebungalow.co.za

BOBO'S BRASSERIE | Mouille Point, Cape Town

"Bobo" is a slang word for "hipster" in French, however, this is no earthy hangout for bearded bikers wearing overpriced second hand clothing. It is a sophisticated and beautifully designed restaurant that lets in light from everywhere, so you can enjoy the seascape, whilst creating an old-world feeling of elegance with its décor. Lush floral wallpaper, buttoned leather banquettes, open fireplace, bookshelves, velvet chairs, all that. On windy days the doorman insists he open the door for you every time and on sunny days the floor-to-ceiling windows are thrown open. The service is beyond exceptional and among the best you can experience in Cape Town.
Diners can expect classically French inspired feature dishes, seasonal specials menus, and a choice of Chef's plates from a changing menu. For starters you are spoilt for choice but they offer fine oysters, escargot, and dry aged beef tartare with capers. If you get there and their bouillabaisse is on the menu, it is a definite must; Chef Amber-May Deetlefs outdid herself there. The chocolate fondant is addictive.
Perfect for sundowners in the lounge or the patio that can turn into a French champagne dinner!
1 Two Oceans Beach, Beach Road, Mouille Point, Cape Town.
Open Monday to Sunday from 12h00 to 22h30.
Tel: (021) 439-9027
Email: info@bobosbrasserie.co.za
www.bobosbrasserie.co.za

RESTAURANTS



CHÉZ FONG | Houghton, Johannesburg

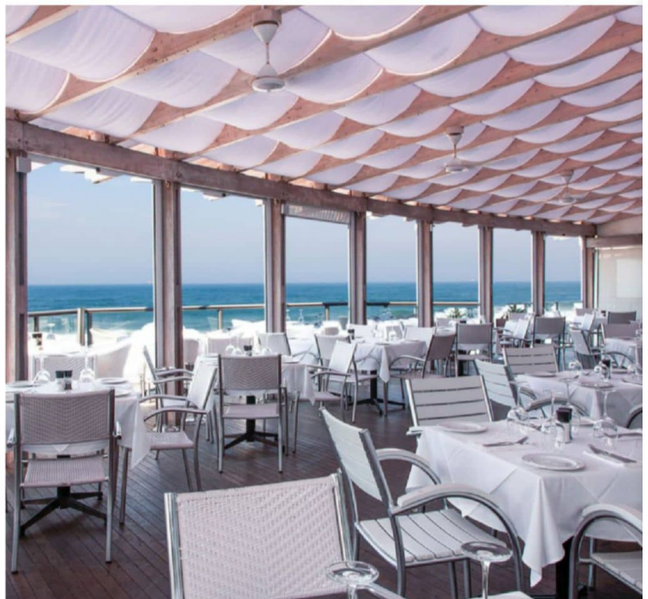
This is inspired home cooking like nothing else in Joburg. Chef patron Su-yen Thornhill is part Chinese and her style of cooking is Asian liberally infused with European and African flavours. Each week the menu is different, depending on what is freshly available at the time.
Guests are seated on the verandah (closed and heated in winter) and the cooking takes place at the other end. Su-yen is an amusing host, so you can sit at the counter and watch the dishes take shape before your very eyes.
If you are vegetarian or vegan, mention this when you book. You will be well taken care of.
Diners can bring their own drinks. There's a great atmosphere and many people have become regulars. Friendships have also been formed over the superb meals. Booking is essential for the Wednesday Tiger Kitchen experience – a ten course tasting menu comprising seasonally fresh produce – and leave everything up to the chef. You'll be bowled over!
Houghton, Johannesburg.
Open Wednesdays from 19h00 to 23h00.
Tel: 074 361-9079
Email: suyent@me.com
www.facebook.com/Chezfong

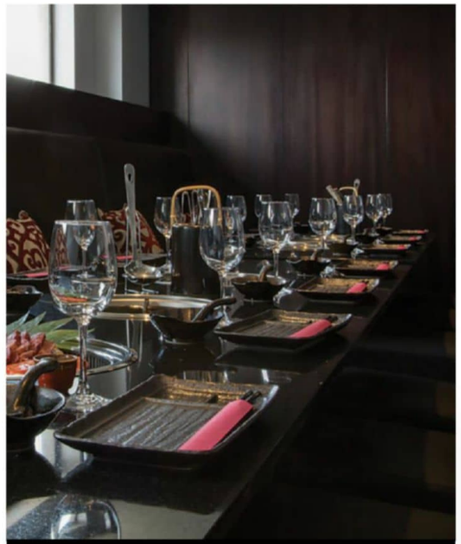
LA MADELEINE | Lynnwood Ridge, Pretoria

Nearly three decades have passed since La Madeleine Restaurant opened and its first advert appeared in *Gay Pages* magazine.
They took classic French and Belgian tastes and created a relaxed, respectful environment, which remains deliciously constant today. The eatery takes its name from the shell shaped Madeleine biscuit of which French gay writer Marcel Proust once wrote that it "invades the senses with exquisite pleasure." The same is true of La Madeleine restaurant. Here, they do not have a written menu, rather customers are treated to the personal attention of Chef Leusch who visits each table individually to describe the ever changing specials of the day. They also take pride in offering you value for money.
122 Priory Road, Lynnwood Ridge, Pretoria.
Open for dinner from Tuesday to Saturday from 18h30 and lunch only on Sundays from 12h00.
Tel: (012) 361-3667 / (012) 348-1249
www.lamadeleine.co.za

MUNDO VIDA | Umdloti, KZN

Seafood reigns supreme at this idyllic restaurant with its prime location on Umdloti Beach. Using the freshest local ingredients, traditional cooking methods underscore the food, but flavours are contemporary and up to date with modern food trends. With the ocean literally on their doorstep, guests are treated to the finest seafood and linefish caught by local fishermen is preferred.
Asian influences are evident in the slow-roasted pork belly with red dragon sauce. The menu also offers pizzas and pastas. And, for those who are watching their weight, there is a good selection of banting dishes to order from.
Attention to detail is evident in the plating (and portions are generous without being too much), and the service is good. The wine list is rather eclectic.
1 South Beach Road, Umdloti, KwaZulu-Natal.
Open for lunch Monday to Sunday from 12h00 to 15h00 and dinner Monday to Saturday from 18h00 to 21h30.
Tel: (031) 568-2286
www.mundovida.co.za





BIRU | Sandton, Johannesburg

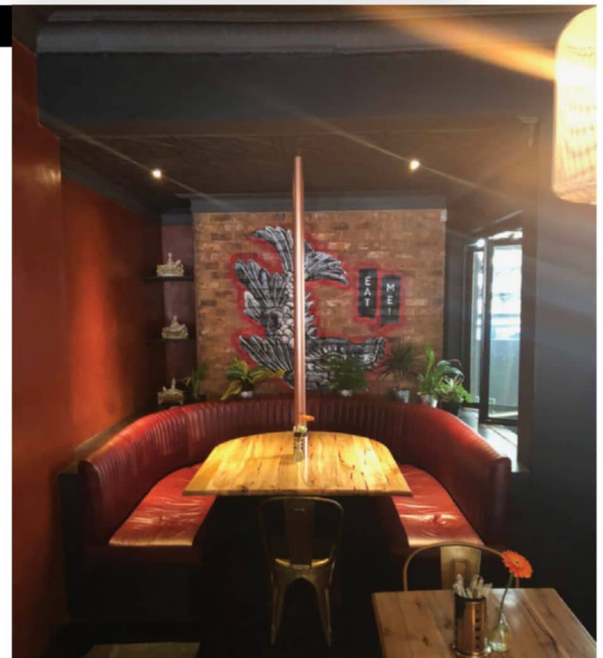
Biru is a concept restaurant that incorporates the pleasure of braaing and fine dining together, bringing you an unforgettable experience of fun and laughter and to a certain extent the feel of homemade food right at your table. It is their belief that everyone has a chef within them and they operate on the simple understanding that some people just like their meat done their own way!
Choose your meat from their fantastic selection beef, chicken, lamb, pork, duck, and more. Biru also offers options ranging from seafood and sushi to vegetarian.
329 Rivonia Boulevard, Sandton.
Open Tuesdays to Sundays from 11h00 to 14h30 and 18h00 to 21h30.
Tel: (011) 234-2581
www.biru.co.za

FYN | Cape Town

Peter Tempelhoff, Ashley Moss and Jennifer Hugé head up Fyn, one of Cape Town's newest culinary gems. Peter steered the Greenhouse at Cellars Hohenort, among other establishments, to worldwide fame but has now turned his skills to this dining extravaganza.
The cuisine is contemporary, uber chic and will leave you breathless. With the kitchen part of the dining room, this restaurant delivers a touch of theatricality as well. Overall, the ambience is as much part of the food experience.
With more than a nod to traditional Japanese kaiseki cuisine, patrons can expect exciting flavour combinations presented as works of art. Wine can be ordered as a flight to pair with your meal, or from the excellent wine list. Fyn is possibly one of the finest dining experiences in all of Cape Town.
5th Floor, Speakers Corner, 37 Parliament Street, Cape Town.
Open Monday from 18h30 to 20h30. Tuesday to Friday for lunch from 12h00 to 14h00 and for dinner from 18h30 to 20h30. Saturday dinner only from 18h30 to 20h30. Closed Sunday and Monday.
Tel: (021) 286-2733
Email: info@fynrestaurant.com
www.fynrestaurant.com

LOVE ME SO | Melville, Johannesburg

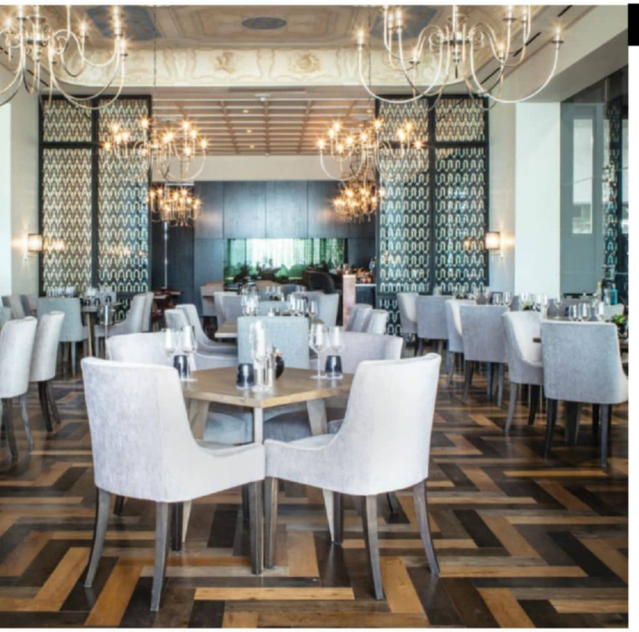
Funky décor, cool music, great service… and the food is ultra-yum. This ramen spot is a delight. They serve superb cocktails (half price during happy hour) and there is something for everyone from carnivores, to vegetarians and vegans. The menu is an eclectic assortment of Asian-inspired dishes – from Korean barbeque and Japanese ramen, to *izakaya* (Japanese pub food), and poke and soba bowls. Take your palate on an adventure and order several dishes to share.
Highly recommended are the beef tataki, fluffy *korokke* (Japanese potato croquettes) and the steamed barramundi is sheer heaven. Finish with the black sesame ice cream – you'll be back just to have more!
63A 4th Ave, Melville.
Open Tuesday and Wednesday from 17h00 to 22h00 (Half price cocktails between 17h00 and 19h00). Thursday and Saturday from 12h00 to 22h00 (Half price cocktails between 17h00 and 19h00). Sunday from 12h00 to 18h00 (Half price cocktails between 13h00 to 16h00). Closed on Mondays. Booking is advised.
Tel: 060 717-6728
Email: info@lovemeso.co.za
www.facebook.com/lovemesojozi



RESTAURANTS

UMAMI SUSHI | Kommetjie, Cape Town

Beautifully prepared and presented sushi and succulent seafood is on offer at this delightful venue. The décor is crisp and service is top-notch. Enjoy your meal in the tranquil garden when the weather is fine. A big bonus is the garden is pet-friendly, so if your fluffies are well-behaved, by all means, take them along.
The farm is simply stunning and offers a wide variety of shops – from organic produce, to interior décor, to art, wine, and cheese. Situated on the route to Cape Point, it's a delightful destination in itself, or great for a stop while exploring the area.
Imhoff Farm, Kommetjie road, Kommetjie, Western Cape.
Open from Monday to Sunday 12h00 to 21h00.
Tel: 060 504-8036
Email: umamiimhoff@gmail.com
www.imhofffarm.co.za/restaurants/umami

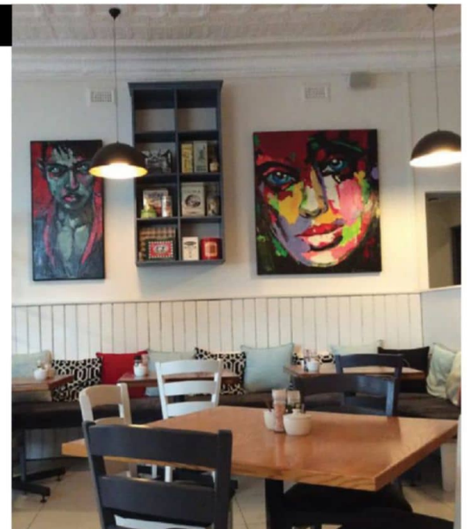


AVANT-GARDE | Stellenbosch

Each of Hazendal's dining establishments offer a distinct ambience and is the ideal canvas for a creative play on food creations. With South African-born executive chef Michélle Theron at the helm, guests can expect a unique and welcoming culinary experience that varies in style. Every venue offers a taste of Russia. Hazendal's culinary portfolio caters to a broad range of taste preferences and occasions. The Avant-Garde Restaurant pushes boundaries through its contemporary fine-dining and creative interpretation of South African and Russian recipes. The Zakuski menu consists of Russian inspired smaller dishes similar to tapas. With a focus on the quality of the ingredients, each creation is framed by Hazendal's fine wines, in addition to labels from neighbouring wineries in the Bottelary region. Hazendal also offers a Russian Tea Ceremony experience. Be taken to a different culture and enjoy a specially sourced Russian Tsar Blend Tea, paired with a delectable range of traditional Russian pastries. If you are looking for a more leisurely lunch or a scrumptious breakfast, the Babushka Deli will be the perfect choice.
Hazendal Wine Estate, Bottelary Road, Stellenbosch.
Avant-Garde is open for lunch from Tuesday to Sunday 11h00 to 17h00, Thursday and Friday from 11h00 to 15h30. Dinner Thursday and Friday from 18h30 (kitchen closes at 21h00).
Booking for lunch at the Avant-Garde Restaurant is essential.
Tel: (021) 205-5620
Email: bookings@hazendal.co.za
www.hazendal.co.za/opening-times-and-reservations

JULES ON JARVIS | East London

The owners are two chefs, Keagan Schlunz and Julia Chemaly, met in Cape Town while studying at Silwood School of Cookery. The duo has garnered a reputation for using only the best and freshest ingredients in their food. The menu changes regularly, as the chefs experiment with new and innovative flavours and ingredients.
34 Jarvis Road, Berea, East London.
Open for breakfast from Monday to Saturday from 07h30 to 12h00. Lunch from Monday to Friday from 11h00 to 15h00. Dinner from Monday to Saturday from 16h00 to 21h30.
Tel: (043) 726-8774
Email: julesonjarvis@gmail.com
www.facebook.com/julesonjarvis



KWÉYÒL | Cape Town

Caribbean supermodel Mala Bryan's new restaurant has brought some island vibes to Cape Town. A melting pot of Creole flavours, colours and island music, this new Afro-Caribbean eatery is situated in a tropical jungle at Botanik Social House, the newly revamped events venue opposite the Company's Garden in Queen Victoria Street. Botanik Social House is a new addition to Giorgio Nava's restaurant group alongside his 95 and Carne collections.
Kwéyòl, the Caribbean word for Creole, is inspired by Mala's childhood memories growing up on the island of St Lucia. By recreating a piece of her home and serving her favourite island food, Mala wants to transport Kwéyòl guests to the Caribbean.
54 Queen Victoria Street, Cape Town.
Open for dinner from Monday to Saturday from 17h00 till late.
Tel: (021) 424-5306
www.facebook.com/pg/kweyolcapetown

RIVER CAFÉ | Sandton, Johannesburg

We often hear people lamenting that there are very few restaurants in garden settings in Johannesburg, but that's a fallacy – there are plenty. River Café is a relaxed venue offering al fresco dining in the beautiful, enclosed surroundings of the Sandton Field and Study Centre. It's the perfect space to enjoy Johannesburg's excellent climate with friends and family.
They serve great breakfasts outdoors on the lawns or in the restaurant. Lunches range from fresh creative salads, to pastas, gourmet burgers, meze platters, delicious pizzas, wraps and so much more.
River Café is a fantastic option for functions of all kinds.
Sandton Field and Study Centre, Corner Louise Avenue and 14th Street, Parkmore Sandton.
Open from Tuesday to Sunday from 09h00 to 17h00.
Tel: (011) 783-2442
Email: lorraine.rivercafe@gmail.com
www.rivercafesandton.co.za

CAFÉ PICOBELLA | Melville, Johannesburg

This modest eatery has been one of our local favourites for many years. The old house has been given an Italianesque makeover with stone arches, a massive pizza oven and simple interior. The north-facing patio is popular year-round and if your furkids are well-behaved, they are welcome on the patio. The menu is pretty standard Italian fare, but there are a few stand-out dishes, like the beef lasagne and the salmon pasta, but their pizzas are good as well. It's a great weekend breakfast spot. The owner, Dayon, is a lovely man and knows all his regulars by name. If he's in, there will be classical Italian opera on the sound system, which adds immeasurably to the atmosphere. Service is friendly, but a tad inconsistent. Service notwithstanding, Picobella is a home-from-home – and office – for many Melvilleans.
66 Fourth Avenue, Melville, Johannesburg
Open daily from 08h00 to 22h00.
Tel: (011) 482-4309
Email: picobella@live.co.za

RESTAURANTS

ARBOUR CAFÉ | Birdhaven, Johannesburg

If you love galettes, this is the place to have them. Gluten-free buckwheat pancakes are filled with a range of delicious fillings. Try the chef's suggestion of smoked Norwegian salmon, capers, cucumber, dill crème fraïche and an egg. Its heavenly.
Omelettes, croissants and French toast are on offer for breakfast, while lunch and dinner offerings like the impeccable confit duck with five spice cherry sauce and other dishes from land and sea will keep diners happy. The menu is extensive and has something for every palate and stage of hunger.
The cold lemon soufflé with toasted almonds and vanilla ice cream is a perfect summer dessert.
The hidden courtyard and free Wi-Fi are added bonusses.
Shop 6, 64 St. Andrews Road, corner Wrenrose Avenue, Birdhaven, Johannesburg.
Open Sunday to Tuesday from 07h30 to 17h00. Wednesday to Saturday from 07h30 to 22h00.
Tel: (011) 788-4111
Email: info@arbourcafe.co.za
www.arbourcafe.co.za

AL PESCATORE | Ballito, KZN

It might be the oldest restaurant in Ballito, but that certainly doesn't mean its stuck in a rut. The owner designs new chef's specials every day and with the unbeatable view over Clark Bay, its easy to see why Al Pescatore has been a firm favourite among locals and visitors alike.
The food is based on Mediterranean/Italian cooking, but a few local favourites can also be found on the rather extensive menu. First choice should be the seafood platter consisting of a selection expertly prepared fresh fish and seafood. If you happen to be dining with friends, a good option would be to order a selection of gourmet pizzas to share. The Cajun chicken, and Thai prawns and calamari are absolutely divine. Carnivores will love the fillet with marsala and if you are vegetarian, there are many superb offerings on the menu. Service is slick and the waiting staff are knowledgeable and attentive.
14 Edward Place, Ballito.
Open from Monday to Sunday from 11h30 to 21h00.
Tel: (032) 946-3574
Email: info@alpescatore.co.za
www.alpescatore.co.za

MOGG'S | Hermanus

Mogg's Country Cookhouse, located in the beautiful Hemel-en-Aarde Valley outside Hermanus, this family run restaurant is surrounded by mountains, fields, fruit and vines. Open since 1994, Jenny and Julia Mogg have gained a reputation for excellence far beyond our borders. Cosy and quaint, the cottage restaurant seats diners indoors and outdoor dining for 30 is at the whim of the weather. The setting is beautiful even in winter.
Fresh vegetables and herbs come from the cook's garden and local produce is used, hence the menu changes frequently. The food is wholesome, and beautifully presented. Try the roasted lamb shank in puff pastry, or if you're vegetarian, the Middle Eastern aubergine, chickpea and red pepper salad is delightful and is a good accompaniment for the artichoke, spinach and parmesan tartlet. The twice-baked blue cheese soufflé served with cauliflower purée is sublime.
Wines from the region are available on the small wine list.
Nuwe-Pos Farm, 28 Nuwe-Pos Farm Road, Hemel-en-Aarde Valley, 11 km along the R320 from Hermanus.
Open for lunch from Wednesday to Sunday from 12h00 to 14h30. Reservations are recommended.
Tel: 076 314-0671
Email: moggscookhouse@gmail.com
www.moggscookhouse.com

BOMBAY BRASSERIE | Cape Town

Hands-down the finest Indian restaurant in Cape Town. Any maharajah would feel right at home. Embroidered peacocks shimmer on the chairs, chandeliers glitter and the fragrance of exotic spices perfume the air.
The menu features as many meat dishes as vegetarian and if you're unaccustomed to ordering Indian food, the chef's menu is perfect. As with any good Indian food, the best way to experience it is to share. Start with apricot and potato 'tikki' cakes with cumin yoghurt and mango chutney, or fragrant cardamom scented creamy chicken 'doodhia' tikka. Then go to mains like lamb shank simmered in a delicate saffron curry, or tandoori ajowai'n crayfish tails. Vegetarians will love the black lentils and kidney beans simmered overnight. Order some rice and breads as a side and you'll have a feast fit for a maharajah or maharani. Do leave room for dessert – in typical Indian fashion, they are tooth-achingly sweet and utterly heavenly. The wine list is carefully selected to pair well with spicy food.
Prices are on the steep side, but you don't eat like this every day, so make an occasion of it.
Taj Cape Town, corner Wale Street and St George's Mall.
Open for dinner Monday to Sunday from 18h00 to 22h30.
Tel: (021) 819-2066
Email: bc.capetown@tajhotels.com
www.taj.tajhotels.com/en-in/taj-cape-town/restaurants/bombay-brasserie-restaurant

ASADA | Port Elizabeth

Asada means grilled meat in Spanish, and usually refers to beef. If you have ever been to Argentina and loved the food, this restaurant specialises in New Orleans inspired French Creole food and uses an Argentinian fire pit for final finishing. Look out for the paprika grilled oysters. If you must have them cooked, then this the way to enjoy them.
There are tapas, freshly baked bagels with a range of toppings, baguettes, superb seafood, and meat and poultry dishes that will make any carnivore deliriously happy.
Live lobsters are sold at R1 per gram (average 250g each), so if you're not squeamish, pick one and have it prepared in one of four ways. It doesn't get any fresher than this!
If you happen to be vegan, this is not the place for you.
The deli stocks an incredible array of farm and ocean produce.
Shop no. 4, 15 Stanley Street, Port Elizabeth, Eastern Cape.
Open Monday from 11h00 to 22h00, Tuesday to Saturday from 11h00 to 22h00, and Sunday from 11h00 to 21h00.
Tel: (041) 582-1981
Email: fusion.asada@gmail.com
www.asadarestaurant.co.za

GEMELLI | Bryanston, Johannesburg

Perfect for groups of friends who like to share. No-one will look askance if your companions help themselves to one another's dishes. After all, that's what makes the Italian food experience so enjoyable.
Contemporary Italian food is prepared, as it should be, with sustainable seasonal produce. Mediterranean flavours are given a modern update while paying homage to this timeless cuisine. From snacks, to starters, fabulous pastas and meat, seafood and veggie dishes all served with delectable sides (the duck-fat baby potatoes are out of this world), and decadently sinful desserts, patrons are spoilt for choice.
Prices are on the steep side, so make it an occasion!
Shop 13, Posthouse Link Centre, Corner Main and Posthouse Street, Bryanston, Johannesburg.
Open for lunch from Monday to Sunday from 12h00 to 15h00 and dinner on Monday and Tuesday from 17h30 to 21h00 and from Thursday to Saturday from 17h30 to 22h00. Sunday dinner from 17h30 till late.
Tel: 010 591-4333
Email: bookings@gemellirestaurant.co.za
www.gemellirestaurant.co.za

SAINT | Sandton, Johannesburg

Chef David Higgs (Marble) and Gary Kyriacou have opened their latest venue, aptly named Saint. The food is Italian in inspiration, and the décor puts this restaurant firmly on the international stage. 3D projectors create a moving artwork on the dome above the tables, which is a marvel on its own.
On the menu you'll find interesting dishes such as squid ink croquettes, wood-fired steaks and some of the best gnocchi in Jo'burg. The pizzas are the stars of this restaurant and are simply fantastic; Neapolitan in style, with both tomato base and bianca (without tomato base) options available. Do pause at the bar to take in the stunning sculpture of a gigantic and angelic male form, while sipping on one of their elegant cocktails. The experience is fun yet elegant.
With hostesses dressed by David Tlale, this restaurant pushes the boundaries between a place to eat and a full-on immersive art experience.
A great place to meet, eat, and celebrate...sinfully!
The Marc, corner Rivonia Road and Maude Street, Sandton, Gauteng.
Open Monday to Sunday 11h00 to 23h00.
Tel: 010 594-5888
Email: info@saint.restaurant
www.saint.restaurant

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